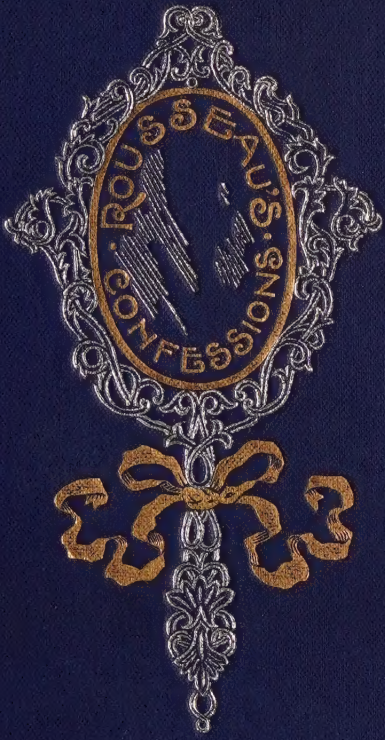
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THE

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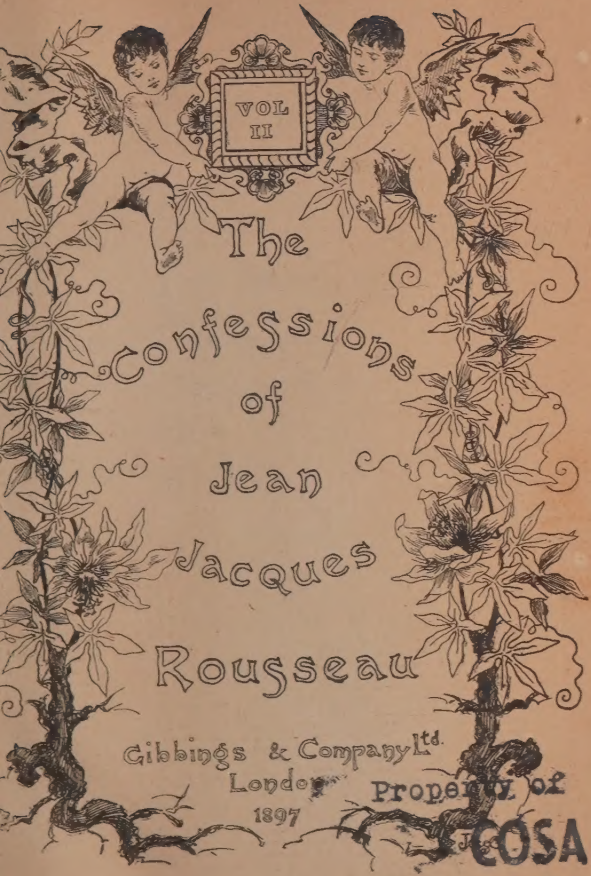

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THE CONFESSIONS OF JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

PART I—BOOK V

[1732-1736]

It was, I believe, in 1732 that I arrived at Chamberi, as already related, and began my employment of registering land for the King. I was almost twenty-one, my mind well enough formed for my age, with respect to sense, but deficient in point of judgment, and needing every instruction from those into whose hands I fell, to make me conduct myself with propriety; for a few years' experience had not been able to cure me radically of my romantic ideas; and, notwithstanding the ills I had sustained, I knew as little of the world, or mankind, as if I had never purchased instruction.

I slept at home—that is, at Mamma's house—but it was not at Annecy: here were no gardens, no brook, no landscape; the house was dark and dismal, and my apartment the most gloomy of the whole. The prospect a dead wall, an alley instead of a street, confined air,

bad light, small rooms, iron bars, rats, and a rotten floor—an assemblage of circumstances that do not constitute a very agreeable habitation; but I was in her house, incessantly near her, at my desk or in her chamber, so that I could not perceive the gloominess of my own, or have time to think of it. It may appear odd that she should reside at Chambéri on purpose to live in this disagreeable house; but it was a trait of contrivance which I ought not to pass over in silence. She had no inclination for a journey to Turin, fearing that, after the recent revolutions, and the agitation in which the Court yet was, she should not be very favourably received there; but her affairs seemed to demand her presence, as she feared being forgotten or ill-treated, particularly as the Comte de Saint-Laurent, Intendant-Général of the Finances, was not in her interest. He had an old house at Chambéri, ill-built, and standing in so disagreeable a situation that it was always untenanted; she hired and settled in this house —a plan that succeeded much better than a journey to Turin would have done, for her pension was not suppressed, and the Comte de Saint-Laurent was ever after her friend.

Her household was much on the old footing; the faithful Claude Anet still remained with her. He was, as I have before mentioned, a peasant of Moutru, who in his childhood had gathered herbs in the Jura for the purpose of making Swiss tea: she had taken him into her service for his knowledge of drugs, finding it convenient to have an herbalist among her

domestics. Passionately fond of the study of plants, he became under her guidance a real botanist, and, had he not died young, might have acquired as much fame in that science as he deserved for being an honest man. Serious even to gravity, and older than myself, he was to me a kind of tutor, commanding respect, and preserving me from a number of follies, for I dared not forget myself before him. He commanded it likewise from his mistress, who knew his understanding, uprightness, and inviolable attachment to herself, and returned it. Claude Anet was of an uncommon temper; I never encountered a similar disposition. He was slow, deliberate, and circumspect in his conduct; cold in his manner; laconic and sententious in discourse; yet of an impetuosity in his passions which, though carefully concealed, preyed upon him inwardly, and urged him to the only folly he ever committed: that folly indeed was terrible—it was poisoning himself. This tragic scene passed soon after my arrival, and opened my eyes to the intimacy that subsisted between Claude Anet and his mistress, for, had not the information come from her, I should never have suspected it; yet surely, if attachment, fidelity, and zeal could merit such a recompense, it was due to him, and, what further proves him worthy such a distinction, he never once abused her confidence. They seldom disputed, and their disagreements ever ended amicably. One, indeed, was not so fortunate; his mistress, in a passion, insulted him grossly, which not being able to digest, he consulted only with despair,

and, finding a bottle of laudanum at hand, drank it off; then went peaceably to bed, expecting to wake no more. Fortunately Madame de Warens herself was uneasy, agitated, wandering about the house, and, finding the phial empty, guessed the rest. Her screams, while flying to his assistance, alarmed me; she confessed all, implored my help, and was fortunate enough, after repeated efforts, to make him vomit the laudanum. Witness of this scene, I could not but wonder at my stupidity in never having suspected the connection; but Claude Anet was so discreet that a more penetrating observer might have been deceived. Their reconciliation affected me, and added respect to the esteem I had before felt for him. From this time I became, in some measure, his pupil, nor did I find myself the worse for his instruction.

I could not learn without pain that she lived in greater intimacy with another than with myself: it was a situation I had not even thought of, but—which was very natural—it hurt me to see another in possession of it. Nevertheless, instead of feeling any aversion to the person who had this advantage over me, I found the attachment I felt for her actually extend to him. I desired her happiness above all things, and, since he was necessary to her happiness, I was content that he should be happy likewise. Meantime he entered perfectly into the views of his mistress, and conceived a sincere friendship for the friend whom she had chosen, and without affecting the authority his situation might have entitled him to, he natur-

ally possessed that which his superior judgment gave him over mine. I dared to do nothing he disapproved of, but he was sure to disapprove only of what merited disapprobation: thus we lived in a union which rendered us mutually happy, and which death alone could dissolve.

One proof of the excellence of this amiable woman's character is, that all those who loved her loved each other, even jealousy and rivalry submitting to the more powerful sentiment with which she inspired them, and I never saw any of those who surrounded her entertain the least ill-will among themselves. Let the reader pause a moment on this encomium, and if he can recollect any other woman who deserves it, let him attach himself to her, if he would obtain happiness—yes, though she be the most degraded of harlots.[1]

From my arrival at Chambéri to my departure for Paris, in 1741, there is an interval of eight or nine years, of which time I have few adventures to relate, my life being as simple as it was agreeable. This uniformity was precisely what was most wanting to complete the formation of my character, which continual troubles had prevented from acquiring any degree of stability. It was during this pleasing interval that my unconnected, unfinished education gained consistence, and made me what I have unalterably remained amid the storms that awaited me. The progress was slow, almost imperceptible, and attended by few memorable

[1] 'La dernière des catins.' These words were suppressed in the Geneva edition.

circumstances; yet it deserves to be followed and investigated.

At first, I was wholly occupied with my business, the constraint of a desk left little opportunity for other thoughts; the small portion of time I was at liberty was passed with my good Mamma, and, not having leisure to read, I felt no inclination for it; but when my business, by daily repetition, became familiar, and my mind was less occupied, study again became necessary, and, as my desires in this direction were ever irritated by difficulty, might once more have become a passion, as at my master's, had not other inclinations interposed and diverted it.

Though our occupation did not demand a very profound skill in arithmetic, it sometimes required enough to puzzle me. To conquer this difficulty, I purchased books which treated of that science, and learned well, for I now studied alone. Practical arithmetic extends further than is usually supposed, if you would attain exact precision. There are operations of extreme length, in which I have sometimes seen good geometricians lose themselves. Reflection, assisted by practice, gives clear ideas, and enables you to devise shorter methods; these inventions flatter our self-complacency, while their exactitude satisfies our understanding, and renders a study pleasant, which is, of itself, ungrateful. At length I became so expert as not to be puzzled by any question that was solvable by arithmetical calculation; and even now, while everything I formerly knew fades

daily on my memory, this acquirement in a great measure remains, through an interval of thirty years. A few days ago, in a journey I made to Davenport, being with my host at an arithmetical lesson given to his children, I worked out with pleasure, and without errors, a most complicated sum. While setting down my figures, methought I was still at Chambéri, still in my days of happiness—how far had I to look back for them!

The colouring of our geometricians' plans had given me a taste for drawing; accordingly I bought colours, and began by attempting flowers and landscapes. It was unfortunate that I had not a talent for this art, for my inclination was much disposed to it, and, while surrounded with crayons, pencils, and colours, I could have passed whole months without wishing to leave them. This amusement engaged me so much, that they were obliged to force me from it; and thus it is with every inclination I give in to, it continues to augment till at length it becomes so powerful that I lose sight of everything except the favourite amusement. Years have not been able to cure me of that fault, nay, have not even diminished it; for while I am writing this, behold me, like an old dotard, infatuated with another—to me useless—study [1] which I do not understand, and which even those who have devoted their youthful days to its acquisition are constrained to abandon at the age when I am beginning with it.

[1] Botany.

At that time, the study I am now speaking of would have been well placed; the opportunity was good, and I had some temptation to profit by it; for the satisfaction I saw in the eyes of Anet, when he came home loaded with newly discovered plants, set me two or three times on the point of going to herborise with him, and I am almost certain that, had I gone once, I should have been caught, and perhaps at this day might have been an excellent botanist, for I know no study more congenial to my natural inclination than that of plants, the life I have led for these ten years past, in the country, being little more than a continual herborising, though I must confess without object and without improvement; but at the time I am now speaking of I had no inclination for botany, nay, I even despised and was disgusted at the idea, considering it only as a fit study for an apothecary. Mamma was fond of it merely for this purpose, seeking none but common plants to use in her medical preparations; thus botany, chemistry, and anatomy were confounded in my idea under the general denomination of medicine, and served to furnish me with pleasant sarcasms the whole day, which procured me, from time to time, a box on the ear. Besides this, a very contrary taste grew up with me, and by degrees absorbed all others; this was music. I was certainly born for that science, I loved it from my infancy, and it was the only inclination I have constantly adhered to; but it is astonishing that what nature seems to have designed me for should

have cost me so much pains to learn, and that I should acquire it so slowly, that after a whole life spent in the practice of the art, I could never attain to sing with any certainty at sight. What rendered the study of music more agreeable to me at that time was being able to practise it with Mamma. In other respects our tastes were widely different: this was a point of coincidence of which I loved to avail myself. She had no more objection to this than myself: I knew at that time almost as much of it as she did, and after two or three efforts we could make shift to decipher an air. Sometimes, when I saw her busy at her furnace, I have said, 'Mamma, here now is a charming duet, which seems made for the very purpose of spoiling your drugs.' Her answer would be, 'If you make me burn them, I'll make you eat them.' Thus disputing, I drew her to the harpsichord; the furnace was presently forgotten, the extract of juniper or wormwood calcined—she smeared my face with the remains; it was delicious sport.

It may easily be conjectured that I had plenty of employment to fill up my leisure hours; one amusement, however, found room that was well worth all the rest.

We lived in such a confined dungeon that it was necessary sometimes to breathe the open air. Anet induced Mamma to hire a garden in the suburbs, for the purpose of rearing plants; to this garden was added a summer-house, which was furnished in the customary manner; we sometimes dined, and I frequently slept there.

Insensibly I became attached to this little retreat; furnished it with a few books and many prints, spending part of my time in ornamenting it, that I might agreeably surprise Mamma when she walked thither. Sometimes I quitted her, that I might enjoy the uninterrupted pleasure of thinking on her; this was a caprice I can neither excuse nor fully explain, I only know this really was the case, and therefore I avow it. I remember Madame de Luxembourg told me one day in raillery of a man who used to leave his mistress that he might enjoy the satisfaction of writing to her; I answered, I could have been this man; I might have added that sometimes I had been this very man. However, I never found it necessary to leave Mamma that I might love her the more ardently, for I was ever as perfectly free with her as when alone—an advantage I never enjoyed with any other person, man or woman, however I might be attached to them; but she was so often surrounded by company who were far from pleasing to me, that spite and weariness drove me to this asylum, where I could indulge her idea, without danger of being interrupted by impertinence.

Thus, my time being divided between business, pleasure, and instruction, my life passed in the most absolute serenity. Europe was not equally tranquil. France and the Emperor had mutually declared war, the King of Sardinia had entered into the quarrel, and a French army had filed off in Piedmont to occupy the Milanese. One column passed through Chambéri, and, among others, the regiment of Champagne,

whose Colonel was Monsieur le Duc de la Trimouille, to whom I was presented. He promised many things, but doubtless never more thought of me. Our little garden was exactly at the end of the faubourg by which the troops entered, so that I could fully satisfy my curiosity in seeing them pass, and I became as anxious for the success of the war as if it had nearly concerned me. Till now I had never troubled myself about politics; for the first time I began reading the gazettes, but with so much partiality on the side of France, that my heart beat with rapture at her most trifling successes, and I was as much afflicted by her reverses as if I had been personally concerned. Had this folly been transient, I should not perhaps have mentioned it; but it took such root in my heart, without any reasonable cause, that when I afterwards acted the anti-despot and proud republican at Paris, I felt, in spite of myself, a secret predilection for the nation I declared servile and for that government I affected to oppose. The oddest of all was that, ashamed of an inclination so contrary to my professed maxims, I dared not own it to any one, but rallied the French on their defeats, while my heart was more wounded than their own. I am certainly the first man who, living with a people who treated him well, and whom he almost adored, put on a borrowed air of despising them; yet my original inclination is so powerful, constant, disinterested, and invincible, that even since my quitting that kingdom, since its government, magistrates, and authors have outvied each other in rancour

against me, since it has become fashionable to load me with injustice and abuse, I have not been able to get rid of this folly, but notwithstanding their ill-treatment, love them in spite of myself.[1]

I long sought the cause of this partiality, but was never able to find any, except in the occasion that gave it birth. A rising taste for literature attached me to French books, to their authors and their country. At the very moment that the French troops were defiling before my eyes, I was reading Brantôme's *Grands Capitaines*; my head was full of the Clissons, Bayards, Lautrecs, Colignys, Montmorencys, and Trimouilles, and I loved their descendants as the heirs of their merit and courage. In each regiment that passed by methought I saw those famous black bands who had formerly done so many noble exploits in Piedmont. In fine, I applied to these all the ideas I had gathered from books; my continuous reading, still drawn from the same nation, nourished my affection for that country, till at length it became a blind passion, which nothing could overcome. I have had occasion to remark several times in the course of my travels that this impression was not peculiar to me, but was more or less active in every country, with that part of the nation who were fond of literature, and cultivated learning; and it was this consideration that balanced the

[1] 'Seeing even now the beginning of England's decadence, which I foretold in the height of her triumph, I lend myself to the fond hope that the French nation, victorious in turn, will come hither some day, and release me from my sad captivity.' This passage is omitted in some editions.

general hatred which the too confident air of the French is so apt to inspire. Their romances, more than their men, attract the women of all countries, and the celebrated dramatic pieces of France create in youth a fondness for their theatres. The reputation which the stage of Paris in particular has acquired draws to it crowds of strangers, who return enthusiasts to their own country. In short, the excellence of their literature captivates the intelligent mind, and in the unfortunate war just ended I have seen their authors and philosophers maintain the glory of France, so tarnished by her warriors.

I was, therefore, an ardent Frenchman. This rendered me a politician, and I attended in the public square, amid a throng of gapers, the arrival of the post, and, sillier than the ass in the fable, was very uneasy to know whose pack-saddle I should next have the honour to carry; for it was then supposed we should belong to France, and that Savoy would be exchanged for the Milanese. I must confess, however, that I experienced some uneasiness, for, had this war terminated unfortunately for the allies, Mamma's pension would have been in a dangerous situation. Nevertheless, I had great confidence in my good friends the French, and for once, in spite of the surprise of Monsieur de Broglie, my confidence was not ill-founded—thanks to the King of Sardinia, whom I had never thought of.

While we were fighting in Italy, they were singing in France. The operas of Rameau began to make a noise there, and once more raise the credit of his theoretic works, which,

from their obscurity, were within the compass of very few understandings. By chance I heard of his *Traité de l'Harmonie*, and had no rest till I acquired it. By another chance I fell sick; my illness was inflammatory—short and violent—but my convalescence was tedious, for I was unable to go abroad for a whole month. During this time I eagerly ran over my *Traité de l'Harmonie*; but it was so long, so diffuse, and so badly disposed, that I found it would require a considerable time to unravel it; accordingly I suspended my inclination, and recreated my sight with music. The cantatas of Bernier were what I principally exercised myself with. These were never out of my mind; I learned four or five by heart, and, among the rest, *Les Amours Dormants*, which I have never seen since that time, though I still retain it almost entirely, as well as *L'Amour Piqué par une Abeille*, a very pretty cantata by Clérambault, which I learned about the same time.

To complete me, there arrived a young organist from Val d'Aost, called the Abbé Palais, a good musician and an agreeable accompanist on the harpsichord. I got acquainted with him, and we soon became inseparable. He had been brought up by an Italian monk, who was a capital organist. He explained to me his principles of music, which I compared with Rameau's. My head was filled with accompaniments, concords, and harmony, but, as it was necessary to accustom the ear to all this, I proposed to Mamma having a little concert once a month, to which she consented. Behold

me, then, so full of this concert, that night or day I could think of nothing else; and it actually employed a great part of my time to select the music, assemble the musicians, look to the instruments, and write out the several parts. Mamma sang; Père Caton (whom I have before mentioned, and shall have occasion to speak of again) sang likewise; a dancing-master named Roche, and his son, played on the violin; Canavas, a Piedmontese musician, who was employed in the survey, and has since married at Paris, played on the violoncello; the Abbé Palais accompanied on the harpsichord; and I had the honour to conduct the whole. It may be supposed all this was charming; I cannot say it equalled my concert at Monsieur de Treytorens', but certainly it was not far behind it.

This little concert, given by Madame de Warens, the new convert, who lived—so it was said—on the King's charity, made the whole tribe of devotees murmur, but was a very agreeable amusement to many worthy people, at the head of whom it would not be easily surmised that I should place a monk, yet, though a monk, a man of considerable merit, and even of a very amiable disposition, whose subsequent misfortunes gave me the most lively concern, and whose idea, attached to that of my happy days, is yet dear to my memory. I speak of Père Caton, a Cordelier, who, in conjunction with the Comte d'Ortan, had caused the music of the poor 'kitten' to be seized at Lyons—which action was far from being the brightest trait in his history. He was a bachelor of the

Sorbonne; had lived long in Paris among the great world, and was particularly in favour with the Marquis d'Antremont, then Ambassador from Sardinia. He was tall and well made; full-faced, with expansive eyes, and black hair, which formed natural curls on each side of his forehead. His manner was at once noble, open, and modest; he presented himself with ease and good manners, having neither the hypocritical nor impudent behaviour of a monk, nor the forward assurance of a man of fashion, but the manners of a well-bred person, who, without blushing for his garb, set a value on himself, and ever felt in his proper situation when in good company. Though Père Caton was not deeply studied for a doctor, he was much so for a man of the world, and, not being compelled to show his talents, he brought them forward so advantageously that they appeared to be greater than they really were. Having lived much in the world, he had attached himself rather to agreeable acquirements than to solid learning; had wit, made verses, spoke well, sang better, and aided his good voice by playing on the organ and harpsichord. So many pleasing qualities were not necessary to make his company sought after, and, accordingly, it was very much so; but this was so far from making him neglect the duties of his function that he was chosen, in spite of his jealous competitors, *définiteur* of his province, or, according to them, one of the great 'collars' of their order.

Père Caton became acquainted with Mamma at the Marquis d'Antremont's; he had heard of

our concerts, wished to assist at them, and, by his company, rendered our meetings truly agreeable. We were soon attached to each other by our mutual taste for music, which in both was a most lively passion, with this difference, that he was really a musician, and myself a bungler. Sometimes, assisted by Canavas and the Abbé Palais, we had music in his apartment, or, on holidays, at his organ, and frequently dined with him; for, what was very astonishing in a monk, he was generous, profuse, and loved good cheer, without the least tincture of greediness. After our concerts, he always used to stay to supper with Mamma, and these evenings passed with the greatest gaiety and good-humour; we conversed with complete freedom, and sang duets; I was perfectly at my ease, had sallies of wit and merriment; Père Caton was charming, Mamma was adorable, and the Abbé Palais, with his rough voice, was the butt of the company. Pleasing moments of sportive youth, how long since have ye fled!

As I shall have no more occasion to speak of poor Père Caton, I will here conclude in few words his melancholy history. His brother monks, jealous—or rather exasperated—at seeing in him a merit and elegance of manners which savoured nothing of monastic stupidity, conceived a violent hatred to him, because he was not as despicable as themselves; the chiefs, therefore, combined against this worthy man, and set on the envious rabble of monks, who otherwise would not have dared to hazard the attack. He received a thousand indignities;

they degraded him from his office, took away the apartment which he had furnished with elegant simplicity, and at length banished him I know not whither. In short, these wretches overwhelmed him with so many evils that his honest and proud soul sank under the pressure, and, after having been the delight of the most amiable societies, he died of grief, on a wretched bed, hid in some cell or dungeon, lamented by all worthy people of his acquaintance, who could find no fault with him, except his being a monk.

Accustomed to this manner of life for some time, I became so entirely attached to music that I could think of nothing else. I went to my business with disgust; the necessary confinement and assiduity appeared an insupportable punishment, which I at length wished to relinquish, that I might give myself up without reserve to my favourite amusement. It will be readily believed that this folly met with some opposition; to relinquish a creditable employment and fixed salary to run after uncertain scholars was too giddy a plan to be approved of by Mamma, and, even supposing my future success should prove as great as I flattered myself it would be, it was fixing very humble limits to my ambition to think of reducing myself for life to the condition of a music-master. She, who formed for me the brightest projects, and no longer trusted implicitly to the judgment of Monsieur d'Aubonne, seeing with concern that I was so seriously occupied by a talent which she thought frivolous, frequently

repeated to me that provincial proverb, which does not hold quite so good in Paris, 'Qui bien chante et bien danse, fait un metier qui peu avance.' On the other hand, she saw me hurried away by this irresistible passion, my taste for music having become a furore, and it was much to be feared that my employment, suffering by my distraction, might draw on me a discharge, which would be worse than a voluntary resignation. I represented to her that this employment could not last long, that it was necessary I should have some permanent means of subsistence, and that it would be much better to complete by practice the acquisition of that art to which my inclination led me, and which she had chosen for me, than to seek for patronage, or make fresh essays, which possibly might not succeed, since by that course, having passed the age for learning, I might be left without a single resource for gaining a livelihood. In short, I extorted her consent more by importunity and caresses than by any satisfactory reasons. Proud of my success, I immediately ran to offer my resignation to Monsieur Coccelli, Director-General of the Survey, as though I had performed the most heroic action, and quitted my employment without cause, reason, or pretext, with as much pleasure as I had accepted it less than two years before.

This step, ridiculous as it may appear, procured me a kind of consideration, which I found extremely useful. Some supposed I had resources which I did not possess; others, seeing me totally given up to music, judged of my

abilities by the sacrifice I had made, and concluded that, with such a passion for the art, I must possess it in a superior degree. In the country of the blind the one-eyed men are kings. I passed here for an excellent master, because all the rest were bad ones. Possessing taste in singing, and being favoured by my age and figure, I soon procured more scholars than were sufficient to compensate for the loss of my secretary's pay.

It is certain that, had it been reasonable to consider the pleasure of my situation only, it was impossible to pass more speedily from one extreme to the other. At our measuring, I was confined for eight hours daily to the most disagreeable employment, with yet more disagreeable company. Shut up in a melancholy counting-house, empoisoned by the smell and respiration of a number of clowns, the major part of whom were ill-combed and very dirty, what with close application, bad air, constraint, and weariness, I was sometimes so far overcome as to experience a vertigo. Instead of this, behold me admitted into the fashionable world, sought after in the first houses, and everywhere received with a gracious air of satisfaction; amiable and gaily dressed young ladies awaiting my arrival, and welcoming me with pleasure. I see nothing but charming objects, smell nothing but roses and orange-flowers; singing, chatting, laughter, and amusements perpetually succeed each other. It must be allowed that, reckoning all these advantages, no hesitation was possible in the choice; in fact, I was so

content with mine that I never once repented it; nor do I even now, when, free from the irrational motives that influenced me at that time, I weigh in the scale of reason every action of my life.

This is, perhaps, the only time that, listening to the inclination, I was not deceived in my expectations. The easy accessibility, obliging temper, and free humour of this country rendered a commerce with the world agreeable, and the inclination I then felt for it proves to me that, if I have a dislike for the society of mankind, it is more their fault than mine.

It is a pity the Savoyards are not rich; though, perhaps, it would be a still greater pity if they were so, for as it is they are the best, the most sociable, people that I know, and if there be a little town in the world where the pleasures of life are experienced in an agreeable and friendly commerce, it is Chambéri. The gentry of the province who assemble there have only sufficient wealth to live and not enough to spoil them; they cannot give way to ambition, but follow, through necessity, the counsel of Cineas, devoting their youth to a military employment, and returning home to grow old in peace, an arrangement over which honour and reason equally preside. The women are handsome, yet do not stand in need of beauty, since they possess all those qualifications which enhance its value and even supply its want. It is remarkable that, being obliged by my profession to see a number of young girls, I do not recollect one at Chambéri that was not

charming. It will be said I was disposed to find them so, and perhaps there may be some truth in the surmise, though I do not believe their charms needed imaginary aid from me. I cannot remember my young scholars without pleasure. Why, in naming the most amiable, cannot I recall them, and myself also, to that happy age in which our moments, pleasing as innocent, were passed with such happiness together! The first was Mademoiselle de Mellarede, my neighbour, and sister to Monsieur Gaime's pupil. She was a fine, clear brunette, lively, gentle, and graceful, without giddiness; thin, as girls of that age usually are; but her bright eyes, slender shape, and easy air required not the additional attraction of plumpness. I went there every morning, when she was usually in undress, her hair carelessly turned up, and, on my arrival, ornamented with a flower, which was taken off at my departure that her hair might be dressed. There is nothing I fear so much as a pretty woman en déshabillé; I should dread her a hundred times less in full dress. Mademoiselle de Menthon, whom I attended in the afternoon, was ever so. She made an equally pleasing, but quite different impression on me. Her hair was flaxen, her person delicate, she was very timid, and extremely fair, had a clear voice, capable of just modulation, but which she had not the courage to employ to its full extent. She had the mark of a scald on her bosom, which a little scarf of blue chenille did not entirely cover: this scar sometimes drew my attention, though not absolutely on its own account. Mademoiselle

de Challes, another of my neighbours, was a fully-grown woman, tall, and well formed; she had been very pleasing, and, though no longer a beauty, might be quoted for her gracefulness, equal temper, and good-humour. Her sister, Madame de Charly, the handsomest woman of Chambéri, did not learn music; but I taught her daughter, who was yet young, and whose growing beauty promised to equal her mother's, if she had not unfortunately been a little red-haired. I had a scholar at the Visitation, a little French lady, whose name I have forgotten, but who merits a place in my list of preferences. She had adopted the slow, drawling tone of the nuns, in which voice she would utter some very keen things, which did not in the least appear to correspond with her manner; but she was indolent, and could not generally take pains to show her wit, that being a favour she did not grant to every one. After a month or two of negligent attendance, this was an expedient she devised to make me more assiduous, for I could not easily persuade myself to be so. When with my scholars, I was fond enough of teaching, but could not bear the idea of being obliged to attend at a particular hour: constraint and subjection in every shape are to me insupportable, and alone sufficient to make me hate even pleasure itself. It is said that in Mohammedan countries a man passes through the streets at daybreak bidding husbands awake and fulfil their duty to their wives. I should be a poor sort of Turk at such times.

I had some scholars likewise among the

tradespeople, and, among others, one who was the indirect cause of a change of relationship, which, as I have promised to declare all, I must relate in its place. She was the daughter of a grocer, and was called Mademoiselle Lard, a perfect model for a Grecian statue, and whom I should quote for the handsomest girl I have ever seen, if true beauty could exist without life or soul. Her indolence, reserve, and insensibility were inconceivable; it was equally impossible to please or make her angry, and I am convinced that had any one formed a design upon her virtue, he might have succeeded, not through her inclination, but her stupidity. Her mother, who would run no risk of this, did not leave her for a single moment. In having her taught to sing and providing a young master, she had hoped to enliven her, but it all proved ineffectual. While the master was admiring the daughter, the mother was admiring the master, but this was equally lost labour. Madame Lard added to her natural vivacity that portion of sprightliness which should have belonged to the daughter. She was a sharp little creature, with small sparkling eyes, slightly inflamed, and was marked with small-pox. On my arrival in the morning, I always found my coffee and cream ready, and the mother never failed to welcome me with a sound kiss on the lips, which I would willingly have returned to the daughter, to see how she would have received it. All this was done with such an air of carelessness and simplicity, that even when Monsieur Lard was present her kisses and glances were

not omitted. He was a good, quiet fellow, the true original of his daughter, nor did his wife endeavour to deceive him, because there was absolutely no occasion for it.

I received all these caresses with my usual stupidity, taking them only for marks of pure friendship, though they were sometimes troublesome; for the lively Madame Lard was exacting, and if, during the day, I had passed the shop without calling, she would have chided me. It became necessary, therefore, when I had no time to spare, to go out of my way through another street, well knowing it was not so easy to quit her house as to enter it.

Madame Lard thought so much of me that I could not avoid thinking something of her. Her attentions affected me greatly, and I spoke of them to Mamma, without supposing any mystery in the matter, but had there been one I should equally have divulged it, for to have kept a secret of any kind from her would have been impossible. My heart lay as open to her as to heaven. She did not understand the matter quite so simply as I had done, but saw advances where I only discovered friendship. She concluded that Madame Lard would make a point of not leaving me as great a fool as she found me, and, some way or other, contrive to make herself understood; but, exclusive of the consideration that it was not just that another should undertake the instruction of her pupil, she had motives more worthy of her, wishing to guard me against the snares to which my youth and condition exposed me. Meantime, a more

dangerous temptation offered, which I likewise escaped, but which proved to her that such a succession of dangers required every preservative she could possibly apply.

Madame la Comtesse de Menthon, mother to one of my scholars, was a woman of great wit, and reckoned to possess at least an equal share of mischief, having, as was reported, caused a number of quarrels, and, among others, one that terminated fatally for the house of Antremont. Mamma had seen enough of her to know her character; for having, very innocently, pleased some person to whom Madame de Menthon had pretensions, she found her guilty of the crime of this preference, though Madame de Warens had neither sought after nor accepted it, and from that moment endeavoured to play her rival a number of ill turns, none of which succeeded. I shall relate one of the most whimsical, by way of specimen. They were together in the country, with several gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and, among the rest, the aspirant in question. Madame de Menthon took an opportunity to say to one of these gentlemen that Madame de Warens was a précieuse, that she dressed ill, and, particularly, that she covered her neck like a tradeswoman. "Oh, for that matter," replied the person she was speaking to, who was fond of a joke, "she has good reason, for I know she is marked with a great ugly rat on the bosom, so naturally that it even appears to be running." Hatred, as well as love, renders its votaries credulous. Madame de Menthon resolved to make use of this discovery, and

one day, while Mamma was at cards with this lady's ungrateful favourite, she took the opportunity of going behind her rival; then drawing back and half-overturning her chair, she dexterously pulled off her mouchoir; but, instead of this hideous rat, the gentleman beheld a far different object, which it was not more easy to forget than to obtain a sight of, and which by no means answered the intentions of the lady.

I was not calculated to engross the attention of Madame de Menthon, who loved to be surrounded by brilliant company; notwithstanding, she bestowed some attention on me, not for the sake of my person, which she certainly did not regard, but for the reputation of wit which I had acquired, and which might have rendered me useful to her predominant inclination. She had a very lively passion for ridicule, and loved to write songs and lampoons on those who displeased her. Had she found me possessed of sufficient talents to aid the fabrication of her verses, and complaisance enough to do so, we should presently have turned Chambéri upside down. These libels would have been traced to their source, Madame de Menthon would have saved herself by sacrificing me, and I should have been cooped in prison, perhaps, for the rest of my life, as a recompence for having figured as the Apollo of the ladies.

Fortunately, nothing of this kind happened; Madame de Menthon made me stay to dinner twice or thrice, to chat with me, and soon found I was too dull for her purpose. I felt this myself, and was humiliated at the dis-

covery, envying the talents of my friend Venture; though I should rather have been obliged to my stupidity for keeping me out of the reach of danger. I remained, therefore, for Madame de Menthon her daughter's singing-master, and nothing more; but I lived happily, and was ever well received at Chambéri, which was a thousand times more desirable than passing for a wit with her, and for a serpent with everybody else.

However this might be, Mamma saw that in order to save me from the perils of youth, it was now necessary to treat me as a man. This she immediately set about, but in the most extraordinary manner that any woman, in similar circumstances, ever devised. I all at once perceived that her manner was graver, and her discourse more moral than usual. To the playful gaiety with which she used to intermingle her instructions suddenly succeeded a uniformity of manner, neither familiar nor severe, but which seemed to prepare me for some explanation. After having vainly racked my brain for the reason of this change, I mentioned it to her. This she had expected, and immediately proposed a walk to our garden the next day. Accordingly, we went there the next morning; she had contrived that we should remain alone the whole day, which she employed in preparing me for those favours she meant to bestow—not as another woman would have done, by scheming and coquetry, but by discourses full of sentiment and reason, rather tending to instruct than seduce, and which spoke more to

my heart than to my senses. Meantime, however excellent and to the purpose these discourses might be, and though far enough from coldness or melancholy, I did not listen to them with all the attention they merited, nor fix them in my memory as I should have done at any other time. That air of preparation which she had adopted gave me a degree of inquietude; while she spoke, in spite of myself I was thoughtful and absent, less attentive to what she said than curious to know what she aimed at; and, no sooner had I comprehended her design, which I could not easily do, than the novelty of the idea, which during all the years I had passed with her had never once entered my imagination, took such entire possession of me that I was no longer capable of minding what she said. I only thought of her; I heard her no longer.

Thinking to render young minds attentive to what you would tell them by proposing some highly interesting object as the result of it, is an error instructors frequently run into, and one which I myself have not avoided in my Émile. The young pupil, struck with the object presented to him, is occupied only with that, and, leaping lightly over your preliminary discourses, fixes at once on the point, to which, in his idea, you lead him too tediously. To render him attentive, he must be prevented from seeing your design beforehand; and, in this particular Mamma behaved with awkwardness. By a singularity which adhered to her systematic disposition, she took the vain precaution of

proposing conditions; but the moment I knew the purchase I no longer even heard them, but immediately consented to everything; and I doubt whether there is a man on the whole earth who would have been frank or courageous enough to dispute terms, or one single woman who would have pardoned such a dispute. By a continuation of the same whimsicality, she attached a number of the gravest formalities to the agreement, and gave me eight days to think of them, which I assured her I had no need of, though that assurance was far from the truth; for, to complete this assemblage of singularities, I was very glad to have this intermission; so much had the novelty of these ideas struck me, and such disorder did I feel in mine, that it required time to arrange them.

It will be supposed that these eight days appeared to me as many ages; on the contrary, I should have been very glad if they had lasted so long. I find it difficult to describe the state in which I found myself; it was a strange chaos of fear and impatience, dreading what I desired, and even studying some fair pretext to evade my happiness. Let my ardent and amorous temperament be remembered, my blood inflamed, my heart intoxicated with love, my health and vigour, my time of life; let it be remembered that, filled with greedy desires, I had never been really intimate with women; that imagination, necessity, vanity, and curiosity united to devour me with the longings to be a man and to appear one; above all, let it not be forgotten that my strong and tender attachment

to her, far from having diminished, had daily gained additional strength; let it be considered that I was only happy when with her, and quitted her only to meditate on her excellences; that my heart was full, not only of her bounty, of her amiable disposition, but of her sex, of her person, of herself; in a word, conceive me united to her by every affinity that could possibly render her dear; nor let it be supposed that, being ten or twelve years older than myself, she began to grow an old woman, or was so in my opinion. From the time, five or six years before, when the first sight of her had made such a fond impression on me, she had really altered very little, and in my mind not at all. To me she was ever charming, and was still thought so by every one. Her figure had acquired a slight fulness, but she had the same fine eyes, the same clear complexion, the same bosom, the same features, the same beautiful light hair, the same gaiety, and even the same voice, whose youthful and silvery sound made so lively an impression on my heart that, even to this day, I cannot hear without emotion a young woman's voice that is at all harmonious.

Naturally, what I had most to fear in waiting for the possession of so lovely a person was anticipation, an inability to govern sufficiently my desires and my imagination, so as to remain master of myself. It will be seen that, in a more advanced age, the bare idea of some trifling favours I had to expect from the person I loved inflamed me so far that I could not support with any degree of patience the time

necessary to traverse the short space that separated us. How, then, by what miracle—when in the flower of my youth—had I so little impatience for the first enjoyment? How could I see the moment advancing with more pain than pleasure? Why, instead of transports that should have intoxicated me, did I experience almost fear and repugnance? I have no doubt that if I could have avoided this happiness with any degree of decency I should have relinquished it with all my heart. I have promised to relate extravagances in the history of my attachment to her; this certainly is one that no one can have expected.

The reader, already disgusted, supposes that, being already possessed by another, she degraded herself in my opinion by this participation, and that a sentiment of disesteem weakened those she had before inspired me with; but he is mistaken. True, this participation gave me a cruel uneasiness, as well from a very natural sentiment of delicacy, as because it appeared unworthy both of her and myself; but, as to my sentiments for her, they were still the same, and I can solemnly aver that I never loved her more tenderly than when I felt so little desire to possess her. I was too well acquainted with the chastity of her heart and the iciness of her constitution to suppose for a moment that the gratification of the senses had any influence in this abandonment of herself. I was perfectly sure that her careful attention to tearing me from dangers otherwise inevitable, and keeping me entirely to myself and my duties, made her

infringe one which she did not regard from the same point of view as other women, of which more will be said hereafter. I pitied her, and pitied myself. I had an inclination to tell her 'No, Mamma, it is not necessary; I can answer for myself without it.' But I dared not —first, because it was a thing not to be said, and that I inwardly knew in my heart was not true; that, in fact, a woman was necessary to keep me from other women, and secure me from temptation. Without longing to possess her, I was glad that she prevented me from wishing to possess others; so much did I look on everything which could divert me from her as a misfortune.

The habit of living a long time innocently together, far from weakening the first sentiments I felt for her, had contributed to strengthen them, giving a more lively, a more tender, but at the same time a less sensual, turn to my affection. Having ever accustomed myself to call her 'Mamma,' and enjoying the familiarity of a son, it became natural to consider myself as such; and I am inclined to think this was the true reason of my lack of eagerness for the possession of a person I so tenderly loved; for I can perfectly recollect that my emotions on first seeing her, though not more lively, were more voluptuous. At Annecy I was intoxicated, at Chambéri I was no longer so. I always loved her as passionately as possible, but I now loved her more for herself and less on my own account; or, at least, I rather sought for happiness than pleasure in her company. She was more to me

than a sister, a mother, a friend, or even than a mistress; in a word, I loved her too much to covet her; such is the clearest idea in my mind.

This day, more dreaded than hoped for, at length arrived. I promised everything that was required of me, and I kept my word: my heart confirmed my engagements without desiring the prize. I obtained it, nevertheless. I found myself for the first time in the arms of a woman—of a woman, too, whom I adored. Was I happy? No: I tasted pleasure. I know not what invincible sadness empoisoned its relish; it seemed that I had committed an incest, and two or three times, pressing her eagerly in my arms, I deluged her bosom with my tears. As for her, she was neither sad nor sprightly; she was caressing and calm. Little inclined to sensuality, she did not seek for gross pleasures, did not experience their delights, nor ever felt the remorse that often follows them.

I repeat it, all her failings were the effect of her errors, never of her passions. She was well born, her heart was pure; she loved good manners, her desires were regular and virtuous, her taste delicate; she seemed formed for that elegant purity of manners which she ever loved, but never practised, because, instead of listening to the dictates of her heart, she followed those of her reason, which led her astray. When false principles drew her from the right path, her true sentiments have always veiled them. Unhappily, she piqued herself on philosophy, and the morals she drew from thence clouded the genuine purity of her heart.

Monsieur de Tavel, her first lover, was her instructor in this philosophy, and the principles he instilled into her mind were such as tended to seduce her. Finding her cold and impregnable on the side of her passions, and firmly attached to her husband and her duty, he attacked her by sophisms, endeavouring to prove that the list of duties she thought so sacred was but a sort of catechism, fit only for children; that the union of the sexes was, in itself, absolutely indifferent; that all the morality of conjugal faith consisted in opinion, the contentment of husbands being the only reasonable rule of duty in wives; consequently, that concealed infidelities, doing no injury, could be no crimes; in a word, he persuaded her that the sin consisted only in the scandal, that woman being really virtuous who took care to appear so. Thus the deceiver obtained his end in subverting the reason of a girl whose heart he found it impossible to corrupt, and received his punishment in a devouring jealousy, being persuaded that she treated him as he had prevailed on her to treat her husband. I do not know whether he was mistaken in this respect: the Minister Perret passed for his successor; all I know is that the coldness of temperament which it might have been supposed would have kept this young woman from embracing this system, in the end prevented her from renouncing it. She could not conceive how so much importance should be given to what seemed to have none for her; nor could she honour with the name of virtue an abstinence which cost her so little.

She did not, therefore, give in to this false principle on her own account, but for the sake of others; and that from another maxim almost as false as the former, but more consonant to the generosity of her disposition. She was persuaded that nothing could attach a man so truly to any woman as possession, and though she was only susceptible of friendship, this friendship was so tender that she made use of every means which depended on her to secure the objects of it, and, which is very extraordinary, almost always succeeded; for she was so truly amiable that an increase of intimacy was sure to discover additional reasons for loving her. Another thing worthy of remark is, that after her first folly she only favoured the unfortunate. Lovers in a more brilliant station lost their labour with her, but the man who at first attracted her pity must have possessed very few good qualities if in the end he did not obtain her affection. Even when she made an unworthy choice, far from proceeding from base inclinations, which were strangers to her noble heart, it was the effect of a disposition too generous, humane, compassionate, and sensible, which she did not always govern with sufficient discernment.

If some false principles misled her, how many admirable ones did she not possess, which never forsook her! By how many virtues did she atone for her failings! if we can call by that name errors in which the senses had so little share. The man who in one particular deceived her so completely had given her excellent instructions in a thousand others; and her passions,

far from turbulent, permitting her to follow the dictates of reason, she ever acted wisely when her sophisms did not intervene. Her motives were laudable even in her failings. False principle might lead her to do ill, but she never did anything which she conceived to be wrong. She abhorred lying and duplicity, was just, equitable, humane, disinterested, true to her word, her friends, and those duties which she conceived to be such; incapable of hatred or revenge, and not even conceiving that there was a merit in pardoning; in fine—to return to those qualities which were less excusable—though she did not properly value, she never made a vile barter of her favours: she lavished, but never sold them, though continually reduced to expedients for a subsistence; and I dare assert that, if Socrates could esteem Aspasia, he would have respected Madame de Warens.

I am well aware that in ascribing sensibility of heart with coldness of temperament to the same person, I shall generally, and with some reason, be accused of a contradiction. Perhaps Nature blundered, and this combination ought not to have existed; I only know it did exist. All those who knew Madame de Warens, a great number of whom are yet living, have had opportunities of knowing this was a fact; I dare even aver she had but one pleasure in the world, which was pleasing those she loved. Let every one argue on the point as he likes, and gravely prove that this cannot be; my business is to declare the truth, and not to enforce belief.

I learned by degrees the particulars I have

just related in those conversations which succeeded our union, and alone rendered it delicious. She was right when she concluded her complaisance would be useful to me: I derived great advantages from it in point of instruction. Hitherto she had used me as a child; she now began to treat me as a man, and spoke of herself. Everything she said was so interesting, and I was so sensibly touched with it, that, reasoning with myself, I applied these confidential relations to my own improvement, and received more instruction from them than from her teaching. When we truly feel that the heart speaks, our own opens to hear its voice; nor can all the pompous morality of a pedagogue have half the effect that is produced by the tender, affectionate, and artless conversation of a sensible woman on him who loves her.

The intimacy in which I lived with her having placed me more advantageously in her opinion than formerly, she began to think, notwithstanding my awkward manner, that I deserved cultivation for the polite world, and that, if I could one day show myself there in an eligible situation, I should soon be able to make my way. In consequence of this idea, she set about forming not only my judgment, but my address, endeavouring to render me amiable as well as estimable; and if it be true that success in this world is consistent with strict virtue—which, for my part, I do not believe—I am certain there is no other road than that she had taken and wished to point out to me. For Madame de Warens knew mankind, and under-

stood exquisitely well the art of treating all ranks, without falsehood and without imprudence, neither deceiving nor provoking them; but this art was rather in her disposition than her precepts; she knew better how to practise than explain it; and I was of all the world the least calculated to become master of such an attainment. Accordingly, the means employed for this purpose were nearly lost labour, as well as the pains she took to procure me a fencing and a dancing master. Though easy in movement, without clumsiness, and well made, I could never learn to dance a minuet; for, being plagued with corns, I had acquired a habit of walking on my heels, which Roche could never break me of; and never, without an appearance of effort, could I jump an ordinary ditch. It was still worse at the fencing-school, where, after three months' practice, I made but very little progress, and could never attempt fencing with any but my master. My wrist was not supple enough, nor my arm sufficiently firm to retain the foil, whenever he chose to make it fly out of my hand. Added to this, I had a mortal aversion both to the art itself and to the person who undertook to teach it to me, nor should I ever have imagined that any one could have been so proud of the science of slaying men. To bring his vast genius within the compass of comprehension, he explained himself by comparisons drawn from music, of which he understood nothing. He found striking analogies between a hit in *quarte* or *tierce* with the intervals of music which bear these names.

When he made a feint he cried out, 'Take care of this *diesis*,' because anciently they called the *diesis* a *feint*; and when he made the foil fly from my hand, he would add with a sneer that this was a *pause*. In a word, I never in my life saw a more insupportable pedant than this poor fellow, with his *plumet* and his *plastron*.

I made, therefore, but little progress in my exercises, which I presently quitted from pure disgust; but I succeeded better in an art of more value—namely, that of being content with my situation, and not desiring one more brilliant, for which I began to be persuaded Nature had not designed me. Given up to the endeavour of rendering Mamma happy, I was ever best pleased when in her company, and notwithstanding my fondness for music, began to grudge the time I employed in giving lessons to my scholars.

I am ignorant whether Anet perceived the full extent of our intimacy, but I am inclined to think he was no stranger to it. He was a young man of great penetration, and still greater discretion; who never belied his sentiments, but did not always speak them. Without giving me the least hint that he was acquainted with the matter, he appeared by his conduct to be so; nor did this moderation proceed from baseness of soul, but, having entered entirely into the principles of his mistress, he could not reasonably disapprove of the natural consequences of them. Though as young as herself, he was so grave and thoughtful that he looked on us as two children who required indulgence,

and we regarded him as a respectable man, whose esteem we had to preserve. It was not until after she was unfaithful to Anet that I learned the strength of her attachment to him. As she was fully sensible that I only thought, felt, or lived for her, she let me see therefore how much she loved him, that I might love him likewise, and dwelt less on her friendship than on her esteem for him, because this was the sentiment that I could most fully share. How often has she affected our hearts, and made us embrace with tears, by assuring us that we were both necessary to her happiness! Let not women read this with an ill-natured smile: with the temperament she possessed, this necessity was not equivocal, it was only that of the heart.

Thus there was established, among us three, a society without example, perhaps, on the face of the earth. All our wishes, our cares, our very hearts were for each other, and absolutely confined to this little circle. The habit of living together, and living exclusively from the rest of the world, became so strong, that if at our repasts one of the three were wanting, or a fourth person came in, everything seemed deranged; and, notwithstanding our particular attachments, even our tête-à-tête meetings were less agreeable than our reunion. What banished constraint was a lively reciprocal confidence, and dulness could find no place among us, because we were fully employed. Madame de Warens, always projecting, always busy, left us no time for idleness, though, indeed, we had

each sufficient employment on our own account. It is my maxim, that idleness is as much the pest of society as of solitude. Nothing more contracts the mind, or engenders more tales, mischief, gossiping, and lies, than for people to be eternally shut up in the same apartment together, and reduced, from the want of employment, to the necessity of an incessant chat. When every one is busy, unless you have really something to say, you may continue silent; but, if you have nothing to do, you must absolutely speak continually, and this, in my mind, is the most burthensome and the most dangerous constraint. I will go farther, and maintain that, to render company harmless, as well as agreeable, it is necessary, not only that each should have something to do, but something that requires a degree of attention. Knitting, for instance, is absolutely as bad as doing nothing; you must take as much pains to amuse a woman whose fingers are thus employed as if she sat with her arms across; but let her embroider, and it is a different matter: her occupation is sufficient to fill up the intervals of silence. What is most disgusting and ridiculous, during these intermissions of conversation, is to see, perhaps, a dozen overgrown fellows get up, sit down again, walk backwards and forwards, turn on their heels, play with the chimney ornaments, and rack their brains to maintain an inexhaustible chain of words. What a charming occupation! Such people, wherever they go, must be troublesome both to others and themselves. When I was at Motiers,

I used to employ myself in making laces with my neighbours, and, were I again to mix with the world, I would always carry a cup-and-ball in my pocket, and would sometimes play with it the whole day, that I might not be constrained to speak when I had nothing to discourse about. If every one would do the same, mankind would be less mischievous, their company would become more rational, and, in my opinion, a vast deal more agreeable. In a word, let wits laugh as they please, but I maintain that the only practical lesson of morality within the reach of the present age is that of the cup-and-ball.

However, they did not give us the trouble of studying expedients to avoid weariness when by ourselves, for a troop of importunate visitors gave us too much by their company, to feel any when alone. The annoyance they formerly gave me had not diminished; all the difference was that I now found less opportunity to abandon myself to my dissatisfaction. Poor Mamma had not lost her old predilection for schemes and systems. On the contrary, the more she felt the pressure of her domestic necessities, the more she endeavoured to extricate herself from them by visionary projects; and, in proportion to the decrease of her present resources, she contrived to enlarge in idea those of the future. Increase of years only strengthened this folly: as she lost her relish for the pleasures of the world and youth, she replaced it by an additional fondness for secrets and projects. Her house was never clear of quacks, contrivers of new

manufactures, alchemists, projectors of all kinds, whose discourse began by a distribution of millions, and concluded by a request for a crown-piece. No one went from her empty-handed; and what astonished me most was how she could so long support such profusion without exhausting the source, or wearying her creditors.

Her principal project at the time I am now speaking of—not the most unreasonable of those she favoured—was that of establishing a Royal Botanic Garden at Chambéri, with a demonstrator attached to it. It will be unnecessary to add for whom this office was designed. The situation of this town, in the midst of the Alps, was extremely favourable to botany, and Mamma, who was always for helping out one project with another, proposed that a College of Pharmacy should be added; which really would have been a very useful foundation in so poor a country, where apothecaries are almost the only medical practitioners. The retirement of the chief physician Grossi to Chambéri, on the demise of King Victor, seemed to favour this idea, or, perhaps, first suggested it. However this may be, by flattery and attention she set about managing Grossi, who, in fact, was not very manageable, being the most caustic and brutal, for a man who had any pretensions to the quality of a gentleman, that ever I knew. The reader may judge for himself by two or three traits which I shall add by way of specimen.

He assisted one day at a consultation with

some other doctors, and among the rest was a young gentleman from Annecy, who was physician in ordinary to the sick person. This young man—being but indifferently taught for a doctor—was bold enough to differ in opinion from Monsieur Grossi, who only answered him by asking him when he should return, which way he meant to take, and what conveyance he should make use of. The other, having satisfied Grossi in these particulars, asked him if there were anything he could serve him in. 'Nothing, nothing,' answered he; 'only I shall place myself at a window in your way, that I may have the pleasure of seeing an ass ride on horseback.' His avarice equalled his riches and want of feeling. One of his friends wanted to borrow some money of him on good security. 'My friend,' answered he, shaking him by the arm, and grinding his teeth, 'should St. Peter descend from heaven to borrow ten pistoles of me, and offer the Trinity as surety, I would not lend them.' One day, being invited to dinner with Comte Picon, Governor of Savoy, who was very religious, he arrived before it was ready, and found his excellency busy at his devotions, who proposed to him the same employment. Not knowing how to refuse, he knelt down with a frightful grimace, but had hardly recited two Aves when, not able to contain himself any longer, he rose hastily, snatched his hat and cane, and, without speaking a word, made off. Comte Picon ran after him, crying, 'Monsieur Grossi! Monsieur Grossi! stop; there's a most excellent partridge on the spit

for you.' 'Monsieur le Comte,' replied the other, turning his head, 'though you should give me a roasted angel, I would not stay.' Such was Monsieur le Proto-médecin Grossi, whom Mamma undertook and succeeded in taming. Though his time was very much occupied, he accustomed himself to come frequently to her house, conceived a friendship for Anet, seemed to think him intelligent, spoke of him with esteem, and, what would not have been expected from such a brute, affected to treat him with respect, wishing to efface the impressions of the past; for, though Anet was no longer on the footing of a domestic, it was known that he had been one, and nothing less than the countenance and manner of the chief physician was necessary to set an example of respect which would not otherwise have been paid him. Thus, Claude Anet, with a black coat, a well-dressed wig, a grave, decent behaviour, a circumspect conduct, a tolerable knowledge in medical and botanical matters, and the patronage of the chief of the faculty, might reasonably have hoped to fill, with universal satisfaction, the place of Royal Demonstrator of Botany, had the proposed establishment taken place. Grossi, indeed, highly approved of the plan, and only waited an opportunity to propose it to the administration, whenever a return of peace should permit them to think of useful institutions, and enable them to spare the necessary pecuniary supplies.

But this project, whose execution would probably have plunged me into botanical studies,

for which I am inclined to think Nature designed me, failed through one of those unexpected strokes which frequently overthrow the best concerted plans. I was destined to become by degrees an example of human misery; and it might be said that Providence, who called me to these extraordinary trials, put aside every obstacle that could prevent my encountering them. In an excursion which Anet made to the top of the mountain to seek for génipi, a rare plant that grows only on the Alps, and which Monsieur Grossi had occasion for, he unfortunately heated himself so much that he was seized with a pleurisy which génipi could not relieve, though said to be specific in that disorder; and, notwithstanding all the art of Grossi, who certainly was very skilful, and all the care of his good mistress and myself, he died on the fifth day of his disorder, in the most cruel agonies. During his illness he had no exhortations but mine, bestowed with such transports of grief and zeal that, had he been in a state to understand them, they must have been some consolation to him. Thus I lost the firmest friend I ever had; a man estimable and extraordinary, in whom Nature supplied the defects of education, and who, though in a state of servitude, possessed all the virtues essential to a great man, which, perhaps, the world would have acknowledged him to be, had he lived and possessed opportunities.

The next day I spoke of him to Mamma with the most sincere and lively sense of affliction; when, suddenly, in the midst of our conversa-

tion, the vile, unworthy thought occurred that I should inherit his wardrobe, and particularly a handsome black coat, which I thought very becoming. As I thought this, I consequently uttered it; for when with her, to think and to speak was the same thing. Nothing could have made her feel more forcibly the loss she had sustained than this mean and odious observation, disinterestedness and greatness of soul being qualities which the deceased had eminently possessed. The poor woman turned from me, and, without any reply, burst into tears. Dear and precious tears; their reprehension was fully felt; they ran into my very heart, washing from thence even the smallest traces of such despicable and unworthy sentiments, never to return.

This loss caused Mamma as much inconvenience as sorrow, since from this moment her affairs were still more deranged. Anet was extremely exact, and kept everything in order: his vigilance was universally feared, and this restrained profusion. She herself, to avoid his censure, kept her dissipation within bounds; his attachment was not sufficient, she wished to preserve his esteem, and avoid the just remonstrances he sometimes took the liberty to make, by representing that she squandered the property of others as well as her own. I thought as he did—nay, I even sometimes expressed myself to the same effect, but had not an equal ascendency over her, and my advice did not make the same impression. On his decease I was obliged to occupy his place, for which I had

as little inclination as ability, and therefore filled it ill. I was not sufficiently careful, and so very timid that, though I frequently found fault with myself, I suffered matters to take their own course; besides, though equal confidence was reposed in me, I had not the same authority. I saw the disorder that prevailed, trembled at it, sometimes complained, but was never attended to. I was too young and lively to have any pretension to the exercise of reason, and, when I would have acted the censor, Mamma, calling me her little Mentor, with two or three playful slaps on the cheek, brought me back to my proper self.

An idea of the certain distress into which her ill-regulated expenses, sooner or later, must necessarily plunge her, made a stronger impression on me since I had become the inspector of her household, and had a better opportunity of calculating the inequality that subsisted between her income and her expenditure. I even date from this period the beginning of that inclination to avarice of which I have ever since been sensible. I was never foolishly prodigal, except by intervals; but till then I was never concerned whether I had much or little money. I now began to pay more attention to this circumstance, taking care of my purse, and becoming mean from a laudable motive; for I only sought to insure to Mamma some resource against that catastrophe which I foresaw. I feared her creditors would seize her pension, or that it might be discontinued, and she reduced to want, when I foolishly imagined that the

trifle I could save might be of essential service to her; but, to accomplish this, it was necessary I should conceal what I meant to make a reserve of; for it would have been an awkward circumstance, while she was driven to expedients, to let her know that I had a little hoard. Accordingly, I sought out some hiding-places, where I laid up a few louis, resolving to augment this stock from time to time, till I had a convenient opportunity to lay it at her feet; but I was so incautious in the choice of my repositories that she always discovered them, and, to convince me that she did so, changed the gold I had concealed for a larger sum in different pieces. Ashamed of these discoveries, I brought back to the common purse my little treasure, which she never failed to lay out in clothes or other things for my use, such as a silver-hilted sword, watch, or the like.

Being convinced that I should never succeed in accumulating money, and that what I could save would furnish but a very slender resource, I concluded that there was no other way of averting the threatened misfortune save placing myself in such a situation that I might be enabled to provide for her, whenever she, through lack of means, should be unable to provide for me. Unhappily, seeking these resources on the side of my inclinations, I foolishly determined to consider music as my principal dependence; and ideas of harmony rising in my brain, I imagined that, if placed in a proper situation to profit by them, I should acquire celebrity, and presently become a

modern Orpheus, whose tunes would attract all the riches of Peru. As I began to read music tolerably well, the question was, how I should learn composition. The difficulty lay in meeting with a good master, for with the assistance of my 'Rameau' alone I despaired of ever being able to accomplish it; and, since the departure of Monsieur Le Maître, there was nobody in Savoy who understood anything of the principles of harmony.

I am now about to relate another of those inconsequences of which my life is full, and which have so frequently carried me directly from my designs, even when I thought myself immediately within reach of them. Venture had spoken to me in very high terms of the Abbé Blanchard, who had taught him composition; a deserving man, possessed of great talents, who was music-master to the Cathedral at Besançon, and is now in that capacity at the Chapel of Versailles. I therefore determined to go to Besançon, and take some lessons from the Abbé Blanchard; and the idea appeared so rational to me that I soon brought Mamma to the same opinion. She set about the preparations for my journey, in the same style of profusion with which all her plans were executed. Thus this project for preventing a bankruptcy, and repairing in future the waste of dissipation, began by causing her to expend eight hundred francs; her ruin being accelerated that I might be put in a condition to prevent it. Foolish as this conduct may appear, the illusion was complete on my part, and even on hers; for I was

persuaded that I wrought for her emolument, and she thought she was highly promoting mine.

I expected to find Venture still at Annecy, and to obtain a recommendatory letter from him to the Abbé Blanchard; but he had left that place, and I was obliged to content myself in the room of it with a mass in four parts, of his composition, which he had left with me. With this recommendation I set out for Besançon, by way of Geneva, where I saw my relations; and through Nyon, where I saw my father, who received me in his usual manner, and promised to forward my portmanteau, which, as I travelled on horseback, came after me. I arrived at Besançon, and was kindly received by the Abbé Blanchard, who promised me his instruction, and offered his services in any other particular. We had just set about our music, when I received a letter from my father, informing me that my portmanteau had been seized and confiscated at Les Rousses, a French barrier on the side of Switzerland. Alarmed at the news, I employed the acquaintance I had formed at Besançon to learn the motive of this confiscation. Being certain there was nothing contraband among my baggage, I could not conceive on what pretext it could have been seized; at length, however, I learned the facts, which, being curious, must not be omitted.

I became acquainted at Chambéri with a very worthy old man, from Lyons, named Monsieur Duvivier, who had been employed at the Visa,

under the Regency, and, for want of other business, now assisted at the Survey. He had lived in the polite world, possessed talents, was good-humoured, and understood music. As we both wrote in the same chamber, we preferred each other's acquaintance to that of the unlicked cubs that surrounded us. He had some correspondents at Paris, who furnished him with those little nothings, those daily novelties, which circulate, one knows not why, and die, one cares not when, without any one thinking of them longer than they are heard. As I sometimes took him to dine with Mamma, he in some measure treated me with respect, and, wishing to render himself agreeable, endeavoured to make me fond of these trifles, for which I had naturally such a distaste that I never in my life read any of them. Unhappily one of these accursed papers happened to be in the waistcoat pocket of a new suit, which I had only worn two or three times to prevent its being seized by the commissioners of the customs. This paper contained an insipid Jansenist parody on the great scene in Racine's *Mithridate*. I had not read ten lines of it, but by forgetfulness left it in my pocket, and this caused all my necessaries to be confiscated. The commissioners, at the head of the inventory of my portmanteau, set a most pompous procès-verbal, in which it was taken for granted that this manuscript came from Geneva for the sole purpose of being printed and distributed in France, and then ran into holy invectives against the enemies of God and the Church, and praised the pious vigilance

of those who had prevented the execution of this infernal machination. They doubtless found also that my shirts smelt of heresy, for, on the strength of this dreadful paper, they were all seized, and from that time I never received any account of my unfortunate portmanteau. The revenue officers whom I applied to for this purpose required so many instructions, informations, certificates, memorials, and so forth, that, lost a thousand times in the perplexing labyrinth, I was constrained to abandon them entirely. I feel a real regret for not having preserved the procès-verbal issued from the office of Les Rousses, for it was a piece calculated to hold a distinguished rank in the collection which is to accompany this work.

This loss immediately brought me back to Chambéri, without having learned anything of the Abbé Blanchard. Reasoning with myself on the events of this journey, and seeing that misfortunes attended all my enterprises, I resolved to attach myself solely to Mamma, to share her fortune, and distress myself no longer about future events, which I could not regulate. She received me as if I had brought back treasures, replaced by degrees my little wardrobe, and, though this misfortune fell heavily enough on both, it was forgotten almost as suddenly as it arrived.

Though this mischance had rather damped my musical ardour, I did not leave off studying my 'Rameau,' and, by repeated efforts, was at length able to understand it, and to make some little attempts at composition, the success of

which encouraged me to proceed. The Comte de Bellegarde, son to the Marquis of Antremont, had returned from Dresden, after the death of King Augustus. Having long resided at Paris, he was fond of music, and particularly that of Rameau. His brother, the Comte de Nangis, played on the violin; Madame la Comtesse de la Tour, their sister, sang tolerably. This rendered music the fashion at Chambéri, and a kind of public concert was established there, the direction of which was at first designed for me; but they soon discovered that I was not competent to the undertaking, and it was otherwise arranged. Notwithstanding this, I continued writing a number of little pieces in my own way, and, among others, a cantata, which gained great approbation; it could not, indeed, be called a finished piece, but the airs were written in a style of novelty, and produced a good effect, which was not expected from me. These gentlemen could not believe that, reading music so indifferently, it was possible I should compose any that was passable, and made no doubt that I had taken to myself the credit of some other person's labours. Monsieur de Nangis, wishing to be assured of this, called on me one morning with a cantata by Clérambault which he had transposed, as he said, to suit his voice, and to which another bass was necessary, the transposition having rendered that of Clérambault impracticable. I answered that it required considerable labour, and could not be done on the spot. Being convinced that I only sought an excuse, he pressed me to write at

least the bass to a recitative. I did so—not well, doubtless, because, to attempt anything with success, I must have both time and freedom —but I did it according to rule, and he could not doubt my knowledge of the elements of composition. I did not, therefore, lose my scholars, though it blunted my passion for music to think that there should be a concert at Chambéri in which I was not necessary.

About this time, peace being concluded, the French army repassed the Alps. Several officers came to visit Mamma, and among others the Comte de Lautrec, Colonel of the regiment of Orléans, since Plenipotentiary of Geneva, and afterwards Marshal of France, to whom she presented me. On her recommendation he appeared to interest himself greatly in my behalf, promising a great deal, which he never remembered till the last year of his life, when I no longer stood in need of his assistance. The young Marquis de Sennecterre, whose father was then Ambassador at Turin, passed through Chambéri at the same time, and dined one day at Madame de Menthon's, when I happened to be among the guests. After dinner, the discourse turned upon music, which the Marquis understood extremely well. The opera of *Jephté* was then new. He mentioned this piece; it was brought him, and he made me tremble by proposing to execute it between us. He opened the book at that celebrated double chorus,

'La terre, l'enfer, le ciel même,
Tout tremble devant le Seigneur!'

He said, 'How many parts will you take? I will undertake these six.' I had not yet been accustomed to this trait of French vivacity, and, though acquainted with partitions, could not comprehend how one man could undertake to perform six, or even two, parts at the same time. Nothing has cost me more trouble in music than to skip lightly from one part to another, and have the eye at once on a whole partition. By the manner in which I evaded this trial, Monsieur de Sennecterre must have been inclined to believe that I did not understand music, and perhaps it was to satisfy himself in this particular that he proposed my noting a song that he wished to present to Mademoiselle de Menthon, in such a manner that I could not avoid it. He sang this song, and I wrote from his voice, without giving him much trouble to repeat it. When finished, he read my performance, and said—which was true—that it was very correctly noted. He had observed my embarrassment, and now seemed to enhance the merit of this little success. In reality, I then understood music very well, and only wanted that quickness at first sight which I possess in no one particular, and which is only to be acquired in this art by long and constant practice. Be that as it may, I was fully sensible of his kindness in endeavouring to efface from the minds of others, and even from my own, the embarrassment I had experienced on this occasion. Twelve or fifteen years afterwards, meeting this gentleman at several houses in Paris, I was often tempted to remind him of this anecdote, and show him that I still

remembered it; but he had lost his sight in the interval, I feared to give him pain by recalling to his memory how useful it formerly had been to him, and was therefore silent.

I now touch on the moment that binds my past existence to the present; some friendships of that period, prolonged to the present time, being very dear to me, have frequently made me regret that happy obscurity when those who called themselves my friends were really so—loved me for myself, through pure goodwill, and not from the vanity of being acquainted with a conspicuous character, perhaps for the secret purpose of finding more occasions to injure him. From this time I date my first acquaintance with my old friend Gauffecourt, who, notwithstanding every effort to disunite us, has still remained so. Still remained so! No, alas! I have just lost him! but his affection terminated only with his life—death alone could put a period to our friendship. Monsieur de Gauffecourt was one of the most amiable men that ever existed; it was impossible to see him without affection, or to live with him without feeling a sincere attachment. In my life I never saw features more expressive of frankness, kindness, and serenity, or that marked more feeling, more understanding, or inspired greater confidence. However reserved one might be, it was impossible even at first sight to avoid being as free with him as if he had been an acquaintance of twenty years; for myself, who find so much difficulty to be at ease among new faces, I was familiar with him in a moment. His manner, accent,

and conversation perfectly suited his features. The sound of his voice was clear, full, and musical; it was an agreeable and expressive bass, which satisfied the ear, and sounded upon the heart. It was impossible to possess a more equal and pleasing vivacity, or more real and unaffected gracefulness, more natural talents, or cultivated with greater taste. Join to all these good qualities an affectionate heart, but loving rather too diffusively, and bestowing his favours with too little caution; serving his friends with zeal, or rather making himself the friend of every one he could serve, yet contriving very dexterously to manage his own affairs while warmly pursuing the interests of others. Gauffecourt was the son of a simple clockmaker, and had been a clockmaker himself. His person and talents, however, soon called him to a superior situation. He became acquainted with Monsieur de la Closure, the French Resident at Geneva, who conceived a friendship for him, and procured him some connections at Paris, which were useful, and through whose influence he obtained the privilege of furnishing the salts of Valais, which was worth twenty thousand livres a year. This very amply satisfied his wishes with respect to fortune, but with regard to women there was more difficulty,—he had a wide field in which to choose, and chose accordingly. What renders his character more remarkable, and does him greater honour, is that though connected with all conditions he was universally esteemed and sought after without being envied or hated by any one, and I really believe he passed

through life without a single enemy. Happy man! He went every year to the baths of Aix, where the best company from the neighbouring countries resorted, and, being on terms of friendship with all the nobility of Savoy, came from Aix to Chambéri to see the Count de Bellegarde and his father, the Marquis of Antremont. It was here that Mamma met him and introduced me to him, and this acquaintance, which appeared at that time to end in nothing, after many years had elapsed was renewed on an occasion which I shall relate, when it became a real friendship. I apprehend I am sufficiently authorised in speaking of a man to whom I was so firmly attached; but, even had I no personal interest in what concerned him, he was so truly amiable, and born with so many natural good qualities, that, for the honour of human nature, I should think it necessary to preserve his memory. This man, estimable as he was, had, like all other mortals, some failings, as will be seen hereafter; perhaps, had it not been so, he would have been less amiable, since, to render him as interesting as possible, it was necessary he should sometimes act in such a manner as to require a small portion of indulgence.

Another connection of the same time, that is not yet extinguished, and continues to flatter me with that idea of temporal happiness which it is so difficult to obliterate from the human heart, is Monsieur de Conzié, a Savoyard gentleman, then young and amiable, who had a fancy to learn music, or rather to be acquainted

with the person who taught it. With great understanding and taste for polite acquirements, Monsieur de Conzié possessed a mildness of disposition which rendered him extremely attractive, especially to myself, who always like persons of his character. Our friendship was soon formed.[1] The seeds of literature and philosophy which began to ferment in my brain, and only waited for culture and emulation in order to spring up, found in him exactly what was wanting. Monsieur de Conzié had no great inclination to music, and this was useful to me, for the hours destined for lessons were passed anyhow save musically: we breakfasted, chatted, and read new publications—not a word of music. The correspondence between Voltaire and the Prince-Royal of Prussia then made a noise in the world, and these celebrated men were frequently the subject of our conversation, one of whom, recently seated on a throne, already indicated what he would prove himself hereafter; while the other, as much decried as he is now admired, made us sincerely lament the misfortunes that seemed to pursue him, and which are so frequently the appanage of superior talents. The Prince of Prussia had not been happy in his youth, and it appeared that Voltaire was destined never to be so. The interest we took in both parties extended to all that concerned them, and nothing that Voltaire wrote escaped us. The inclination I felt for these performances inspired

[1] I have seen him since, and have found him wholly transformed. What a great magician is Monsieur de Choiseul! None of my old acquaintances have escaped his metamorphoses.—R.

me with a desire to write elegantly, and caused me to endeavour to imitate the beautiful style of that author, with whom I was enchanted. Some time after, his *Lettres Philosophiques* appeared. Though certainly not his best work, it greatly augmented my fondness for study; this was a rising inclination, which from that time has never been extinguished.

But the moment was not yet arrived when I should give myself up to it entirely: my rambling disposition, rather contracted than eradicated, being kept alive by our manner of living at Madame de Warens', which was too bustling for one of my solitary temper. The crowd of strangers who daily swarmed about her from all parts, and the certainty I felt that these people sought only to dupe her—each in his particular mode—rendered home a torment. Since I had succeeded Anet in the confidence of his mistress, I had strictly examined her circumstances, and saw their evil tendency with horror. I had remonstrated a hundred times, prayed, argued, conjured, but all to no purpose. I had thrown myself at her feet, and strongly represented the catastrophe that threatened her; had earnestly entreated that she would reform her expenses, and begin with myself; representing that it was better to suffer something while she was yet young, than, by multiplying her debts and creditors, to expose her old age to vexation and misery. Sensible of the sincerity of my zeal, she was frequently affected, and would then make the finest promises in the world. But only let an artful schemer arrive, and in an in-

stant all her good resolutions were forgotten. After a thousand proofs of the inefficacy of my remonstrances, what remained but to turn away my eyes from the ruin I could not prevent, and fly myself from the door I could not guard! I made, therefore, little journeys to Nyon, Geneva, and Lyons, which diverted my mind in some measure from this secret uneasiness, though it increased the cause by these additional expenses. I can truly aver that I should have acquiesced with pleasure in every retrenchment, had Mamma really profited by it; but, being persuaded that what I might refuse myself would be distributed among a set of interested villains, I took advantage of her easiness to partake with them, and, like the dog returning from the shambles, carried off a portion of that morsel which I could not protect.

Pretences were not wanting for all these journeys; even Mamma would alone have supplied me with more than were necessary, having plenty of connections, negotiations, affairs, and commissions, which she wished to have executed by some trusty hand. In these cases she usually applied to me; I was always willing to go, and consequently found occasions enough to furnish out a rambling kind of life. These excursions procured me some good connections, which have since been agreeable or useful to me. Among others, I met at Lyons with Monsieur Perrichon, whose friendship I accuse myself of not having sufficiently cultivated, considering the kindness he had for me; and that of good Parisot, which I shall speak of

in its place; at Grenoble, that of Madame Deybens and Madame la Présidente de Bardonanche, a woman of great understanding, and who would have entertained a friendship for me, had it been in my power to see her oftener; at Geneva, that of Monsieur de la Closure, the French Resident, who often spoke to me of my mother, the remembrance of whom neither death nor time had erased from his heart; likewise those of the two Barillots, the father, who was very amiable, a good companion, and one of the most worthy men I ever met, calling me his grandson. During the troubles of the Republic these two citizens took contrary sides, the son siding with the people, the father with the magistrates. When they took up arms in 1737 I was at Geneva, and saw the father and son quit the same house armed, the one going to mount guard at the Hôtel de Ville, the other to his quarters, almost certain to meet face to face in the course of two hours, and prepared to give or receive death from each other. This unnatural sight made so lively an impression on me that I solemnly vowed never to interfere in any civil war, nor assist in deciding any internal dispute by arms, either personally or by my influence, should I ever enter into my rights as a citizen. I can bring proofs of having kept this oath on a very delicate occasion, and it will be confessed—at least I should suppose so—that this moderation was of some worth.

But I had not yet arrived at that fermentation of patriotism which the first sight of Geneva in arms has since excited in my heart,

as may be conjectured by a very grave fact that will not tell to my advantage, which I forgot to put in its proper place, but which ought not to be omitted.

My uncle Bernard died in Carolina, where he had been employed for some years in the building of Charlestown, of which he had formed the plan. My poor cousin, too, died in the Prussian service; thus my aunt lost, nearly at the same period, her son and husband. These losses re-animated in some measure her affection for the nearest relative she had remaining, which was myself. When I went to Geneva, I made her house my home, and amused myself with rummaging and turning over the books and papers my uncle had left. Among them I found some curious ones, and some letters of the importance of which they had little knowledge. My aunt, who set no store by these dusty papers, would willingly have given the whole to me, but I contented myself with two or three books, with notes written by the Minister Bernard, my grandfather, and among the rest the posthumous works of Rohault, in quarto, the margins of which were full of excellent commentaries, which gave me an inclination to mathematics. This book remained among those of Madame de Warens, and I have ever since lamented that I did not preserve it. To these I added five or six *mémoires* in manuscript, and a printed one, composed by the famous Micheli Ducret, a man of great talent, learned and enlightened, but too much inclined to political agitation, for which he was cruelly treated by the magistrates of

Geneva, and lately died in the fortress of Arberg, where he had been confined many years, for being, as it was said, concerned in the conspiracy of Berne.

This *mémoire* was a judicious critique on the extensive but ridiculous plan of fortification which had been partially carried out at Geneva, though laughed at by every person of judgment in the art who was unacquainted with the secret motives of the Council in the execution of this magnificent enterprise. Monsieur Micheli, who had been excluded from the committee of fortification for having condemned this plan, thought that, as a citizen and a member of the Two Hundred, he might give his advice at large, and therefore did so in this *mémoire*, which he was imprudent enough to have printed, though he never published it, having only those copies struck off which were meant for the Two Hundred, and which were all intercepted at the post-office by order of the minor Council. I found this *mémoire* among my uncle's papers, with the answer he had been ordered to make to it, and took both. This was soon after I had left my place at the survey, and I yet remained on good terms with the Advocate Coccelli, who had the management of it. Some time after, the director of the custom-house entreated me to stand godfather to his child, with Madame Coccelli, who was to be godmother. Proud of being placed on such terms of equality with the Advocate, I strove to assume importance, and show myself worthy of that honour.

Full of this idea, I thought I could do nothing

better than show him Micheli's *mémoire* in print, which was really a scarce piece, and would prove I was connected with people of consequence in Geneva, who were intrusted with the secrets of the State; yet, by a kind of reserve which I should find it difficult to account for, I did not show him my uncle's answer, perhaps because it was manuscript, and nothing less than print was worthy to approach the Advocate. He understood, however, so well the importance of this paper, which I had the folly to put into his hands, that I could never after get it into my possession, and being convinced that every effort for that purpose would be ineffectual, I made a merit of my forbearance, transforming the theft into a present. I made no doubt that this writing—more curious, however, than useful—answered his purpose at the Court of Turin, where probably he took care to be reimbursed in some way or other for the expense which the acquisition of it might be supposed to have cost him. Happily, of all future contingencies, the least probable is that the King of Sardinia should ever besiege Geneva; but, as that event is not absolutely impossible, I shall ever reproach my foolish vanity with having been the means of pointing out the greatest defects of that city to its most ancient enemy.

I passed three or four years in this manner, between music, magistery, projects, and journeys, floating incessantly from one object to another, and wishing to fix myself, though I knew not on what, but insensibly inclining towards study.

I was acquainted with men of letters, I had heard them speak of literature, and sometimes mingled in the conversation, yet rather adopted the jargon of books than the knowledge they contained. In my excursions to Geneva I frequently called on my good old friend Monsieur Simon, who greatly promoted my rising emulation by fresh news from the republic of letters, extracted from Baillet or Colomiés. I frequently saw, too, at Chambéri, a Dominican professor of physic, a good kind of friar, whose name I have forgotten, who often made little chemical experiments which greatly amused me. In imitation of him, and aided by Ozanam's *Récréations Mathématiques*, I attempted to make some sympathetic ink; and having for that purpose more than half filled a bottle with quicklime, orpiment, and water, I corked it tightly. The effervescence immediately became extremely violent; I ran to unstop the bottle, but had not time to effect it, for during the attempt it burst in my face like a bomb, and I swallowed so much of the orpiment and lime that it nearly cost me my life. I remained blind for six weeks, and by the event of this experiment learned to meddle no more with experimental chemistry while its elements were unknown to me.

This adventure happened very unluckily for my health, which, for some time past, had been visibly on the decline. This was rather extraordinary, as I was guilty of no kind of excess; nor could it have been expected from my make, for my chest, being well formed and rather capacious, seemed to give my lungs full liberty

to play; yet I was short-breathed, felt a very sensible oppression, sighed involuntarily, had palpitations of the heart and spitting of blood, accompanied with a low fever, which I have never since entirely overcome. How is it possible to fall into such a state in the flower of one's age, without any inward decay, or without having done anything to destroy health?

It is sometimes said that the sword wears the scabbard: this was truly the case with me. The violence of my passions both kept me alive and hastened my dissolution. What passions? will be asked. Mere nothings; the most trivial objects in nature, but which affected me as forcibly as if the acquisition of a Helen, or of the throne of the universe, were at stake. In the first place, women. Possessed of one, my senses were satisfied — my heart, never. Extreme longings devoured me even in the moment of fruition. I had a tender mother, a cherished friend, but sighed for a mistress; my fancy painted her as such, and gave her a thousand forms, that I might deceive myself. Had I believed that I was holding Mamma in my embrace when I really did so, I should not have clasped her less warmly, but my sensual desires would have vanished. I should have sobbed with tenderness, but enjoyment would have been lacking. Enjoyment! Is man formed to taste it? Ah! if it had ever in my life been granted that but for a moment only I was to experience the full delights of love, I cannot conceive that my frail being could endure the trial: I should expire at the supreme moment.

I was therefore dying for love without an object, and this condition, perhaps, is, of all others, the most dangerous. I was likewise uneasy—tormented at the bad state of poor Mamma's circumstances, and the imprudence of her conduct, which could not fail to bring her in a short time to total ruin. My tortured imagination, which ever foreruns misfortunes, continually beheld this in its utmost excess, and in all its consequences. I already saw myself forced by want to quit her to whom I had consecrated my future life, and without whom I could not hope for happiness. Thus was my soul continually agitated; longings and fears devoured me alternately.

Music was a passion less turbulent, but no less consuming, from the ardour with which I attached myself to it; by the persistent study of the obscure books of Rameau; by an invincible resolution to charge my memory with rules it could not retain; by continual application, and by vast compilations which I frequently passed whole nights in copying. But why dwell on these particularly, while every folly that took possession of my wandering brain, the most transient ideas of a single day—a journey, a concert, a supper, a walk, a novel to read, a play to see, things in the world the least premeditated in my pleasures or occupation—became for me the most violent passions, which, by their ridiculous impetuosity, inflicted the most serious torments? Even the imaginary misfortunes of Cleveland,[1] read with avidity and frequent interruption,

[1] *Histoire de Monsieur Cléveland*, by the Abbé Prévost.

have, I am persuaded, disordered me more than my own.

There was a Genevese, named Bagueret, who had been employed under Peter the Great, at the Court of Russia, one of the most worthless, senseless fellows I ever met with, full of projects as foolish as himself, which were to rain down millions, but if they came to nothing he was in no way disconcerted. This man, having come to Chambéri on account of some suit pending before the Senate, immediately sought acquaintance with Mamma, and with great reason on his side, since, for those imaginary trifles which he bestowed with prodigality, he gained in exchange the unfortunate crown-pieces, one by one, out of her pocket. I did not like him, and he plainly perceived this, for with me it is not a very difficult discovery, nor did he spare any sort of meanness to gain my goodwill, and, among other things, proposed teaching me to play at chess, of which game he understood something. I made an attempt, though almost against my inclination, and, after several efforts, having learned the elements of the game, my progress was so rapid that before the end of the first sitting I gave him the defeat which in the beginning he had given me. Nothing more was necessary; behold me fascinated with chess! I buy a board and the treatise of 'Le Calabrois,'[1] and, shutting myself up in my chamber, pass whole days and nights in studying all the varieties of the game, being determined, by

[1] Gioachino Greco, a famous master of the game in the time of Louis XIV.

playing alone without end or relaxation, to drive them into my head in spite of myself. After incredible efforts, during two or three months passed in this curious employment, I go to the coffee-house, thin, sallow, and almost stupid. I seat myself, and again attack Monsieur Bagueret. He beats me once, twice, twenty times; so many combinations were fermenting in my head, and my imagination was so stupefied, that all appeared confusion. I tried to exercise myself with Philidor's or Stamma's book of instructions, but I was still equally perplexed, and, having exhausted myself with fatigue, was further to seek than ever, and, whether I abandoned my chess for a time, or resolved to revive my knowledge by unremitted practice, it was the same thing. I could never advance one step beyond the improvement of the first sitting, and always returned in a circle to where I had begun. I should practise for countless ages, with the result of being able to win a game from Bagueret—no more. 'A fine employment of your time!' the reader will say. And not a little time have I so employed. My first endeavours ceased only because I had not strength of mind and body to continue them. When I left my room I had the air of one arisen from the grave, and, if this course of life had lasted, I should not have been long among the living. It will be acknowledged that it would be strange, especially in respect of one like me, in the ardour of youth, that so active a brain could coincide with a healthy constitution.

The alteration of my brain had an effect on my temper, moderating the ardour of my fantasies, for as I grew weaker they became more tranquil, and I even lost, in some measure, my rage for travelling. I was not seized with heaviness, but melancholy; vapours succeeded passions, languor became sorrow. I wept and sighed without cause, and felt my life ebbing away before I had enjoyed it. I trembled to think of the perilous situation in which I should leave my poor Mamma; and I can truly say that quitting her, and leaving her in these melancholy circumstances, was my only concern. At length I fell quite ill, and was nursed by her as never mother nursed a child. The care she took of me was of real utility to her affairs, since it diverted her mind from schemes, and kept projectors at a distance. How pleasing would death have been at that time, when, if I had not tasted many of the pleasures of life, I had felt but few of its misfortunes! My tranquil soul would have taken her flight, without having experienced those cruel ideas of the injustice of mankind which embitter both life and death. I should have enjoyed the sweet consolation that I still survived in the dearer part of myself. It could hardly have been called death; and had I been divested of my uneasiness on her account, it would have appeared but a gentle sleep; yet even these disquietudes had such an affectionate and tender turn, that their bitterness was tempered by a pleasing sensibility. I said to her, 'You are the depository of my whole being; act so that I may be happy.' Two

or three times, when my disorder was violent, I crept to her apartment to give her my advice respecting her conduct: and I dare affirm that these admonitions were both wise and equitable, the interest I took in her future concerns being most strongly marked. As if tears had been both nourishment and medicine, I found myself the better for those I shed with her, while seated on her bedside, and holding her hands between mine. The hours crept insensibly away in these nocturnal discourses. I returned to my chamber better than I had quitted it, being satisfied and calmed by the promises she made, and the hopes with which she had inspired me. I slept on them with my heart at peace, and fully resigned to the dispensations of Providence. God grant, after having had so many reasons to hate life, after being agitated with so many storms, after it has even become a burden, that death, which must terminate all, may be no more terrible than it would have been at that moment!

By inconceivable care and vigilance she saved my life; and I am convinced that she alone could have done this. I have little faith in the skill of physicians, but rely greatly on the assistance of real friends, and am persuaded that being easy in those particulars on which our happiness depends is more salutary than any other application. If there is a sensation in life peculiarly delightful, we experienced it in being restored to each other; our mutual attachment did not increase, for that was impossible, but it became, I know not how, more intimately

tender in its utter simplicity. I became a creature formed by her, wholly her child—more so than if she had been my veritable mother; we got into the habit, though without design, of being continually with each other, and enjoying, in some measure, our whole existence together, feeling reciprocally that we were not only necessary, but entirely sufficient for each other's happiness. Accustomed to think of no subject foreign to ourselves, our happiness and all our desires were confined to that pleasing and singular union, which perhaps has had no equal, which is not, as I have before observed, love, but a sentiment more essential, depending neither on the senses, sex, age, or figure, but closely related to all that composes our rational existence, and which can cease only with our being.

How was it that this delightful crisis did not secure our mutual felicity for the remainder of her life and mine? I have the consoling conviction that it was not my fault, neither was it hers—at least not wilfully. It was decreed that invincible nature was soon to regain its empire. But this fatal return was not suddenly accomplished: there was, thank Heaven, a short but precious interval, that did not conclude by my fault, and which I cannot reproach myself with having employed amiss.

Though recovered from my dangerous illness, I did not regain my strength; my chest was weak, some remains of the fever kept me in a languishing condition, and the only inclination I had was to end my days near one so truly dear

to me; to confirm her in those good resolutions she had formed; to convince her in what consisted the real charms of a happy life, and, as far as depended on me, to render hers so; but I foresaw that in a gloomy, melancholy house, the continual solitude of our own society would at length become too dull and monotonous. A remedy presented itself: Mamma had prescribed milk for me, and insisted that I should take it in the country. I consented, provided she would accompany me: nothing more was necessary to gain her compliance, and whither we should go was all that remained to be determined on. Our suburban garden was not properly in the country, being surrounded by houses and other gardens, and possessing none of those attractions so desirable in a rural retreat; besides, after the death of Anet, we had given up that place from economical principles, feeling no longer a desire to rear plants, and other views making us not regret the loss of that little retreat.

Taking advantage of the distaste I found she began to conceive for the town, I proposed to abandon it entirely, and settle ourselves in an agreeable solitude, in some small house, distant enough from the city to avoid the importunity of idle visitors. She was ready to follow my advice, and this plan, which her good angel and mine suggested, might fully have secured our happiness and tranquillity till death had divided us; but this was not the state we were appointed to. Mamma was destined to endure all the sorrows of indigence and discomfort, after having passed her life in abundance, that she

might learn to quit it with the less regret; and I myself, by an assemblage of misfortunes of all kinds, was to become a striking example to him who, inspired with a love of justice and the public good, and trusting implicitly to his own innocence, shall openly dare to assert truth to mankind, unsupported by cabals, or without having formed parties to protect himself.

An unhappy fear restrained her: she did not dare to quit her ill-contrived house, for fear of displeasing the proprietor. 'Your proposed retirement is charming,' said she, 'and much to my taste, but in our retreat we need maintenance. In quitting this dungeon, I hazard losing the very means of life, and, when these fail us in the woods, we must again return to seek them in the town. That we may have the least possible cause for being reduced to this point, let us not leave our house entirely, but pay this small pension to the Comte de Saint-Laurent, that he may suffer mine to continue. Let us seek some little habitation, far enough from the town to be at peace, yet near enough to return when obliged to do so.' This mode was finally adopted; and, after some small search, we fixed on Les Charmettes, on an estate belonging to Monsieur de Conzié, at a very small distance from Chambéri; but as retired and solitary as if it had been an hundred leagues off. The spot we had concluded on is a valley, between two tolerably high hills, which run north and south; at the bottom, among the trees and pebbles, flows a rivulet, and halfway up the ascent, on either side, are scattered a

number of houses, forming a beautiful retreat for those who love a peaceful, romantic asylum. After having examined two or three of these houses, we chose that which we thought the most pleasing, which was the property of a gentleman of the army, called Monsieur Noiret. This house was in good condition: before it a terrace garden; below that, on the declivity, an orchard; and on the slope behind the house, a vineyard; a little wood of chestnut-trees opposite; a fountain hard by, and higher up the hill meadows for the cattle;—in short, all that could be thought necessary for the country retirement we proposed to establish. To the best of my remembrance we took possession of it towards the latter end of the summer of 1736. I was transported with delight when we retired to rest there for the first time. 'O Mamma!' said I to this dear friend, embracing her with tears of tenderness and joy, 'this is the abode of happiness and innocence; if we do not find them here in each other's society, it will be in vain to seek them elsewhere.'[1]

[1] The house in which Rousseau and Madame de Warens resided at Les Charmettes bears the following lines, which Hérault de Séchelles caused to be inscribed upon it in 1792, when he held the office of Commissary of the Convention in the Department of Mont Blanc:—

'Réduit par Jean-Jacque habité,
Tu me rappelles son génie,
Sa solitude, sa fierté,
Et ses malheurs et sa folie.

À la gloire, à la vérité
Il osa consacrer sa vie,
Et fut toujours persécuté
Ou par lui-même, ou par l'envie.'

BOOK VI

[1736]

Hoc erat in votis: modus agri non ita magnus,
Hortus ubi, et tecto vicinus jugis aquæ fons;
Et paulûm sylvæ super his foret. . . .

I cannot add—

Auctius atque
Dî melius fecere;[1]

but no matter, the former is enough; I had no occasion to have any property there, it was sufficient that I enjoyed it; for I have long since both said and felt that the proprietor and possessor are often two very different people, even leaving husbands and lovers out of the question.

Here begins the short happiness of my life, those peaceful and happy moments which have given me the right to say that I have lived. Precious and ever-regretted moments! Ah! recommence your delightful course; pass more slowly through my memory, if possible, than you actually did in your fugitive succession. How shall I prolong, according to my inclina-

[1] Horace, bk. ii. *Sat.* 6.

tion, this recital, at once so pleasing and simple? How shall I continue to relate the same occurrences, without wearying my readers with the repetition, any more than I was satiated with the enjoyment? Again, if all this consisted of facts, actions, or words, I could somehow or other convey an idea of it; but how shall I describe what was neither said nor done, nor even thought, but enjoyed, felt, without being able to particularise any other object of my happiness than the bare idea? I rose with the sun, and was happy; I walked, and was happy; I saw Mamma, and was happy; I quitted her, and still was happy! Whether I rambled through the woods, over the hills, or strolled along the valley; read, was idle, worked in the garden, gathered fruits, or assisted in household duties, happiness continually accompanied me; it was fixed on no assignable object; it was within me, nor could I depart from it a single moment.

Nothing that passed during that charming epoch, nothing that I did, said, or thought, has escaped my memory. The time that preceded or followed it I only recollect by intervals, unequally and confused; but here I remember all as distinctly as if it existed at this moment. Imagination, which in my youth was perpetually anticipating the future, but now takes a retrograde course, makes some amends by these charming recollections for the deprivation of hope, which I have lost for ever. I no longer see anything in the future that can tempt my wishes; it is a recollection of the past alone

that can flatter me, and the remembrance of the period I am now describing is so true and lively that it sometimes makes me happy, even in spite of my misfortunes.

Of these recollections I shall relate one example, which may give some idea of their force and precision. The first day we went to sleep at Les Charmettes, the way being up-hill, and Mamma rather heavy, she was carried in a chair, while I followed on foot. Fearing the chairmen would be fatigued, she got out about half-way, designing to walk the rest. As we passed along she saw something blue in the hedge, and said, 'There's some periwinkle in flower yet!' I had never seen any before, nor did I stoop to examine this: my sight is too short to distinguish plants on the ground, and I only cast a look at this as I passed. An interval of nearly thirty years had elapsed before I saw any more periwinkle, at least before I observed it, when, being at Cressier, in 1764, with my friend Monsieur du Peyrou, we went up a small mountain, on the summit of which he has a pretty building which he rightly calls Belle-Vue. I was then beginning to herborise. Walking and looking among the bushes, I exclaimed with rapture, 'Ah! there's some periwinkle!'—such, indeed, it was. Du Peyrou, who perceived my transport, was ignorant of the cause, but will some day be informed, I hope, on reading this. The reader may judge by this impression, made by so small an incident, what an effect must have been produced by every occurrence of that time.

Meantime, the air of the country did not restore my health. I was languishing, and became more so. I could not endure milk, and was obliged to discontinue the use of it. Water was at this time the fashionable remedy for every complaint; accordingly I entered on a course of it, and so indiscreetly that it almost released me, not only from my illness, but also from my life. Every morning on rising I went to the spring, carrying a large goblet, from which, while walking to and fro, I imbibed as much as would fill a couple of wine-bottles. I abstained altogether from wine at meal-times. The water I drank was rather hard and difficult to pass, as mountain water generally is; in short, I managed so well, that in the course of two months I totally ruined my stomach, which until then had been very good, and, no longer digesting anything properly, had no reason to expect a cure. At this time an accident happened, as singular in itself as in its subsequent consequences, which can only terminate with my existence.

One morning, being no worse than usual, while putting up the leaf of a small table, I felt a sudden and almost inconceivable revolution throughout my whole frame. I know not how to describe it better than as a kind of tempest, which suddenly rose in my blood, and spread in a moment over every part of my body. My arteries began beating so violently that I not only felt their motion, but even heard it, particularly that of the carotids, attended by a loud noise in my ears, which was of three, or rather

four, distinct kinds. For instance, first a grave, hollow buzzing; then a more distinct murmur, like the running of water; then an extremely sharp hissing, attended by the beating I have mentioned, and whose throbs I could easily count, without feeling my pulse, or putting a hand to any part of my body. This internal tumult was so violent that it destroyed my former acuteness of hearing, and rendered me henceforth not wholly, but partially deaf.

My surprise and fear may easily be conceived. Imagining it was the stroke of death, I went to bed, and, the physician being sent for, I related my case, trembling with apprehension, and judging myself past all cure. I believe the doctor was of the same opinion; however, he performed his office, running over a long string of causes and effects beyond my comprehension, after which, in consequence of this sublime theory, he set about, *in anima vili*, the experimental part of his art; but the means he was pleased to adopt in order to effect a cure were so troublesome, disgusting, and inoperative that I soon discontinued them, and after some weeks, finding I was neither better nor worse, left my bed and returned to my usual mode of living; but the beating in my arteries and the buzzing in my ears have never quitted me for a moment during the thirty years which have elapsed since that time.

Till now I had been a great sleeper, but a total deprivation of repose, with other alarming symptoms which have accompanied it, even to this time, persuaded me I had but a short time to live. This idea tranquillised me for a time.

I became less anxious about a cure, and, being persuaded I could not prolong life, determined to employ the remainder of it as usefully as possible. This was practicable by a particular indulgence of nature, which, in this melancholy state, exempted me from sufferings which it might have been supposed I should have experienced. I was incommoded by the noise, but felt no pain, nor was it accompanied by any habitual inconvenience, except nocturnal wakefulness, and at all times a shortness of breath, which is not violent enough to be called an asthma, but was troublesome when I attempted to run, or use any degree of exertion.

This accident, which seemed to threaten the dissolution of my body, only killed my passions, and I have reason to thank Heaven for the happy effect produced by it on my soul. I can truly say I only began to live when I considered myself dead; for, estimating at their real value those things I was quitting, I began to employ myself on nobler objects, namely, by anticipating those I hoped shortly to have the contemplation of, and which hitherto I had too much neglected. I had often made light of religion, but was never totally devoid of it; consequently, it cost me less pain to employ my thoughts on that subject, which is generally thought melancholy, though highly pleasing to those who make it an object of hope and consolation. Mamma was more useful to me on this occasion than all the theologians in the world could have been.

She, who brought everything into a system,

had not failed to do as much by religion; and this system was composed of ideas that bore no affinity to each other. Some were extremely good, and others very ridiculous, being made up of sentiments proceeding from her disposition, and prejudices derived from education. Believers, in general, make God like themselves: the virtuous make Him good, and the profligate make Him wicked; ill-tempered and bilious devotees see nothing but hell, because they would willingly damn all mankind; while loving and gentle souls would fain disbelieve it altogether; and one of the astonishments I could never overcome is to see the good Fénelon speak of it in his *Télémaque* as if he really gave credit to it; but I hope he lied in that particular, for, however strict he might be with regard to truth, a bishop absolutely must lie sometimes. Mamma lied not while expressing her opinion to me, and that soul without gall, who could not imagine a revengeful and ever-angry God, saw only clemency and forgiveness where devotees beheld justice and punishment. She frequently said there would be no justice in God should He be strictly just to us; because, not having bestowed what was necessary to render us essentially good, it would be requiring more than He had given. A whimsical idea of hers was that, not believing in hell, she was firmly persuaded of the reality of purgatory. This arose from her not knowing what to do with the wicked, being loth to damn them utterly, nor yet caring to place them with the good till they had become so; and we must

really allow that, both in this world and the next, the wicked are very troublesome company.

Another extravagance:—It is seen that the doctrine of original sin and redemption of mankind is destroyed by this system; consequently that the basis of Christianity, as generally received, is shaken, and that the Catholic faith at any rate cannot subsist with these principles. Mamma, notwithstanding, was a good Catholic, or, at least, professed to be one, and certainly desired to become such; but it appeared to her that the Scriptures were too literally and harshly explained, supposing that all we read of everlasting torments were figurative threatenings, and the death of Jesus Christ an example of charity, truly divine, which should teach mankind to love God and each other. In a word, faithful to the religion she had embraced, she acquiesced in all its professions of faith, but, on a discussion of each particular article, it was plain that her ideas were quite opposed to that Church whose doctrines she professed to believe. In these cases she exhibited simplicity of heart, a frankness more eloquent than sophistry, which frequently embarrassed her confessor—for she disguised nothing from him. 'I am a good Catholic,' she would say, 'and will ever remain so. I adopt with all the powers of my soul the decisions of our holy Mother Church; I am not mistress of my faith, but I am of my will, which I submit to you without reserve; I will endeavour to believe all—what can you require more?'

Had there been no Christian morality estab-

lished, I am persuaded she would have lived as if regulated by its principles, so perfectly did they seem to accord with her disposition. She did everything that was required; and she would have done the same had there been no such requisition. In things indifferent she was fond of obeying, and had she not been permitted —had she even been prescribed—to eat meat, she would have fasted between God and herself, without prudence having aught to do with the matter. But all this morality was subordinate to the principles of M. de Tavel, or rather she pretended to see nothing in religion that contradicted them; thus she would have bestowed her favours on twenty men in a day, without any idea of a crime, her conscience being no more moved in that particular than her passions. I know that a number of devotees are not more scrupulous, but the difference is, they are seduced by their passions, she was blinded by her sophisms. In the midst of conversations the most affecting, I might say the most edifying, she would touch on this subject without any change of air or manner, and without being sensible of any contradiction in her opinions. She would have even interrupted her discourse to exchange words for deeds, and resumed it with the former serenity, so much was she persuaded that the whole was only a maxim of social order, and that any person of sense might honestly interpret, apply, or make exceptions, without any danger of offending the Almighty. Though I was far enough from being of the same opinion in this

particular, I confess I dared not combat hers; being ashamed of the very ungallant part I must have acted in support of my argument. I should have been glad to establish these rules for others, and excepted myself, but, besides that her constitution sufficiently prevented the abuse of her notions, I know she did not easily change her mind, and that claiming an exception for myself was claiming it for all those who pleased her. For the rest, I add here this inconsequence with others, though it never had any great influence on her conduct, and, at the time I am speaking of, none; but I have promised faithfully to describe her principles, and I will perform my engagement. I now return to myself.

Finding in her all those ideas I had occasion for to secure me from the fears of death and its future consequences, I drew confidence and security from this source; my attachment became more warm than ever, and I would willingly have transmitted to her my whole existence, which seemed ready to abandon me. From this redoubled attachment, a persuasion that I had but a short time to live, and profound security as to my future state, arose an habitual and even pleasing serenity, which, calming every passion that extends our hopes and fears, suffered me to enjoy without inquietude or concern the few days which I imagined remained for me. What contributed to render them still more agreeable was an endeavour to encourage her rising taste for the country by every amusement I could devise. Seeking to

attach her to her garden, poultry, pigeons, and cows, I amused myself with them; and these little occupations, which employed my time without injuring my tranquillity, were more serviceable than a milk diet, or all the remedies bestowed on my poor shattered body, even to effecting the utmost possible re-establishment of it.

The vintage and gathering in our fruit employed the remainder of the year; we became more and more attached to a rustic life, and the society of our honest neighbours. We saw the approach of winter with regret, and returned to the city as if going into exile. To me this change was particularly gloomy, never expecting to see the return of spring, and thinking I took an everlasting leave of Les Charmettes. I did not leave it without kissing the very earth and trees, and casting back many a wistful look. Having left my scholars for so long a time, and lost my relish for company and the amusements of the town, I seldom went out, conversing only with Mamma and a Monsieur Salomon, who had lately become our physician. He was an honest man, of good understanding, a great Cartesian, spoke tolerably well on the system of the world, and his agreeable and instructive conversations were more serviceable than his prescriptions. I could never bear that foolish, trivial mode of conversation which is so generally adopted; but useful, instructive discourse has always given me great pleasure, nor was I ever backward to join in it. I was much pleased with that of Monsieur Salomon; it appeared to

me that when in his company I anticipated the acquisition of that sublime knowledge which my soul would enjoy when freed from its mortal fetters. The inclination I had for him extended to the subjects which he treated on, and I began to look after books which might better enable me to understand his discourse. Those which mingled devotion with science were most agreeable to me, particularly those of the Oratoire and of Port-Royal. I began to read, or rather to devour them. There fell into my hands one written by Pere Lamy, called *Entretiens sur les Sciences*, which was a kind of introduction to the knowledge of those books it treated of. I read it over an hundred times, and resolved to make this my guide. In short, I found myself irresistibly drawn, in spite of—or rather by—my ill state of health, towards study, and though looking on each day as the last of my life, read with as much avidity as if certain I was to live for ever. I was assured that reading would injure me; but, on the contrary, I am rather inclined to think it was serviceable, not only to my soul, but also to my body; for this application, which soon became delightful, diverted my thoughts from my disorders, and I soon found myself less affected by them. It is certain, however, that nothing gave me absolute ease; but, having no longer any acute pain, I became accustomed to languishment and wakefulness—to thinking instead of acting; in short, I looked on the gradual and slow decay of my body as inevitably progressive, and only to be terminated by death.

This opinion not only detached me from all the vain cares of life, but delivered me from the importunity of medicine, to which hitherto I had been forced to submit against my will. Salomon, convinced that his drugs were unavailing, spared me the disagreeable task of taking them, and contented himself with amusing the grief of my poor Mamma by some of those harmless preparations which serve to flatter the hopes of the patient, and keep up the credit of the doctor. I discontinued the strict regimen I had latterly observed, resumed the use of wine, and lived in every respect like a man in perfect health, as far as my strength would permit, very soberly, but not abstinently. I even began to go out and visit my acquaintance, particularly Monsieur de Conzie, whose conversation was extremely pleasing to me. Whether it struck me as heroic to study to my last hour, or that some hopes of life still lingered in the bottom of my heart, I cannot tell, but the apparent certainty of death, far from relaxing my inclination for improvement, seemed to animate it, and I hastened to acquire knowledge for the other world, as if convinced I should only possess what I could carry with me. I took a liking to the shop of a bookseller, named Bouchard, which was frequented by some men of letters, and as the spring, whose return I had never expected to see again, was approaching, furnished myself with some books for Les Charmettes, in case I should have the happiness to return there.

I had that happiness, and enjoyed it to the utmost extent. The rapture with which I saw

the trees disclose their first buds is inexpressible! The return of spring seemed to me like rising from the grave into Paradise. The snow was hardly off the ground when we left our dungeon and returned to Les Charmettes, to enjoy the first warblings of the nightingale. I now thought no more of dying, and it is really singular that from this time I never experienced any dangerous illness in the country. I have suffered greatly, but never kept my bed, and have often said to those about me, on finding myself worse than ordinary, 'Should you see me at the point of death, carry me under the shade of an oak, and I promise you I shall recover.'

Though weak, I resumed my country occupations, as far as my strength would permit, and conceived a real grief at not being able to manage our garden without help; for I could not take five or six strokes with the spade without being out of breath and overcome with perspiration. When I stooped, the beating redoubled, and the blood flew with such violence to my head that I was instantly obliged to stand upright. Being, therefore, confined to less fatiguing employments, I busied myself about the dove-house, and was so pleased with it that I sometimes passed several hours there without feeling a moment's weariness. Pigeons are very timid and difficult to tame, yet I inspired mine with so much confidence that they followed me everywhere, letting me catch them at pleasure; nor could I appear in the garden or the courtyard without two or three on my arms or head in an instant, and, notwithstanding the pleasure I

took in them, their company became so troublesome that I was obliged to lessen the familiarity. I have ever taken great pleasure in taming animals, particularly those that are wild and fearful. It appeared delightful to me to inspire them with a confidence which I took care never to abuse, wishing them to love me freely.

I have already mentioned that I carried back some books. I did not forget to read them, but in a manner more proper to fatigue than instruct me. I wrongly imagined that, to read a book profitably, it was necessary to be acquainted with every branch of knowledge it even mentioned; far from thinking that the author had not so much knowledge himself, but drew assistance from other books, as he might see occasion. Full of this silly idea, I was stopped every moment, obliged to run from one book to another, and sometimes, before I could read the tenth page of that I was studying, found myself called upon to exhaust whole libraries. I was so attached to this ridiculous method that I lost a prodigious deal of time, and had bewildered my head to such a degree that I was hardly capable of doing, seeing, or comprehending anything. I fortunately perceived, at length, that I was in the wrong road, which would entangle me in an inextricable labyrinth, and quitted it before I was irrevocably lost.

When a person has any real taste for the sciences, the first thing he perceives in the pursuit of them is that connection by which they mutually attract, assist, and enlighten each

other, and that it is impossible to attain one without the assistance of the rest. Though the human understanding cannot grasp all, and one must ever be regarded as the principal object, yet, if the rest be totally neglected, the chosen study is often veiled in obscurity. I was convinced that my resolution was good and useful in itself, but that it was necessary I should change my method; I therefore had recourse to the *Encyclopédie*. I began by dividing the knowledge contained therein into its various branches, but soon discovered that I must pursue a contrary course, that I must take each separately, and trace it to that point where it united with the rest; thus I returned to the general synthetical method, but returned thither with a conviction that I was going right. Meditation supplied the want of knowledge, and a very natural reflection gave strength to my resolution, which was that, whether I lived or died, I had no time to lose; to know nothing before the age of five-and-twenty, and then resolve to learn everything, was engaging to employ the future time profitably. I was ignorant at what point accident or death might put a period to my endeavours, and resolved at all events to acquire with the utmost expedition some idea of every species of knowledge, as well to try my natural disposition as to judge for myself what most deserved cultivation.

In the execution of my plan I experienced another advantage, of which I had never thought: this was, spending a great deal of time profitably. Nature certainly never meant me for study,

since attentive application fatigues me so much that I find it impossible to employ myself half an hour together intently on one subject, particularly while following another person's ideas, for it has frequently happened that I have pursued my own for a much longer period with success. After reading a few pages of an author who must be followed with close application, my understanding wanders and I become lost in the clouds, and should I obstinately continue, I tire myself to no purpose, I am dazzled and am no longer conscious of what I read; but in a succession of various subjects, one relieves me from the fatigue of the other, and without finding respite necessary I can follow them with pleasure. I took advantage of this observation in the plan of my studies, taking care to intermingle them in such a manner that I was never weary. It is true that domestic and rural concerns furnished many pleasing relaxations; but as my eagerness for improvement increased, I contrived to find in these opportunities for my studies, frequently employing myself about two things at the same time, without reflecting that both were ill done.

In relating so many trifling details—which delight me, but frequently tire my reader—I make use of a discretion which he would hardly suspect if I did not take care to inform him of it. For example, I recollect with pleasure all the different methods I adopted for the distribution of my time in such a manner as to produce the utmost profit and pleasure. I may say that the portion of my life which I passed in this retirement, though in continual ill-health, was

that in which I was least idle and least wearied. Two or three months were thus employed in discovering the bent of my genius; meantime I enjoyed, in the finest season of the year, and in a spot thus rendered delightful, the charms of a life of whose worth I was so highly sensible, a society as free as it was charming—if a union so perfect, and the extensive knowledge I proposed to acquire, can be called society. It seemed to me as if I already possessed the learning I sought after; or better still, since the pleasure of acquisition constituted a great part of my happiness.

I must pass over these beginnings, which were to me the height of enjoyment, but are too trivial to bear repeating. Again I say, true happiness is indescribable—it is only to be felt, and this consciousness of felicity is proportionately more the less able we are to describe it, because it does not result from a concourse of favourable incidents, but is a permanent condition of the mind. I am frequently guilty of repetitions, but should be infinitely more so did I repeat the same thing as often as it recurs to my mind. When, at length, my variable mode of life was reduced to a more uniform course, the following was nearly the distribution of time which I adopted.

I rose every morning before the sun, and passed through a neighbouring orchard into a pleasant path, which, running above the vineyard, led towards Chambéri. While walking, I offered up my prayers—not by a vain motion of the lips, but a sincere elevation of my heart

A CHAT WITH MADAME DE WARENS

to the Great Author of delightful Nature, whose beauties were spread out before me. I never liked to pray in a chamber; it seems to me that the walls and all the petty workmanship of man interpose themselves between God and myself. I love to contemplate Him in His works, which elevate my soul, and raise my thoughts to Him. My prayers were pure, I can affirm it, and therefore worthy to be heard. I asked for myself, and her from whom my thoughts were never divided, only an innocent and quiet life, exempt from vice, sorrow, and want; I prayed that we might die the death of the just, and partake their lot hereafter. For the rest, it was rather admiration and contemplation than request, being satisfied that the best means to obtain what is necessary from the Giver of every perfect good is rather to deserve than to solicit. Returning from my walk, I lengthened the way by taking a round-about path, still contemplating with earnestness and delight the beautiful scenes with which I was surrounded—those only objects that never fatigue either the eye or the heart. As I approached our habitation I looked forward to see if Mamma was stirring, and when I perceived her shutters open, I ran with joy towards the house. If they were yet shut, I went into the garden to wait their opening, amusing myself meantime by a retrospection of what I had read the preceding evening, or by gardening. The moment the shutter drew back I hastened to embrace her as she lay, frequently half asleep; and this salute, pure as it was affectionate, possessed from its very

innocence a charm which the senses can never bestow.

We usually breakfasted on milk-coffee; this was the time of day when we had most leisure, and when we chatted with the greatest freedom. These sittings, which were usually pretty long, have given me a fondness for breakfasts, and I infinitely prefer those of England, or Switzerland, which are considered as a meal, at which all the family assemble, to those of France, where people breakfast alone in their apartments, or more frequently have none at all. After an hour or two passed in discourse, I went to my study till dinner, beginning with some philosophical work, such as the Port-Royal Logic, Locke's *Essays*, Malebranche, Leibnitz, Descartes, etc. I soon found that these authors perpetually contradict each other, and formed the chimerical project of reconciling them, which cost me much labour and loss of time, bewildering my head without any profit. At length, renouncing this idea, I adopted one infinitely more profitable, to which I attribute all the progress I have since made, notwithstanding the defects of my capacity—for it is certain I had very little for study. In reading each author, I restricted myself to following all his ideas, without suffering my own or those of any other writer to interfere with them, or entering into any dispute on their utility. I said to myself, 'I will begin by laying up a stock of ideas, true or false, but clearly conceived, till my understanding shall be sufficiently furnished to enable me to compare and make

choice of those that are most estimable.' I am sensible that this method is not without its inconveniences, but it succeeded in furnishing me with a fund of instruction. Having passed some years in thinking after others, without reflection, and almost without reasoning, I found myself possessed of sufficient materials to set about thinking on my own account; and when journeys or business deprived me of the opportunity of consulting books, I amused myself with recollecting and comparing what I had read, weighing every opinion in the balance of reason, and frequently judging my masters. Though it was late before I began to exercise my judicial faculties, I have not discovered that they have lost their vigour, and, on publishing my own ideas, have never been accused of being a servile disciple, or of swearing *in verba magistri*.

From these studies I passed to the elements of geometry, for I never went further, forcing my weak memory to retain them by going over the same ground a hundred and a hundred times. I did not admire Euclid, who rather seeks a chain of demonstration than a connection of ideas. I preferred the Geometry of Père Lamy, who from that time became one of my favourite authors, and whose works I yet read with pleasure. Algebra followed, and Père Lamy was still my guide. When I made some progress, I perused Père Reynaud's *Science du Calcul*, and then his *Analyse Démontrée*, to which I did not give much attention. I never went far enough thoroughly to understand the applica-

tion of algebra to geometry. I was not pleased with this method of performing operations by rule without knowing what I was about: resolving geometrical problems by the help of equations seemed like playing a tune by turning round a handle. The first time that I found by calculation that the square of a binomial figure was composed of the square of each of its parts, and double the product of one by the other, though convinced that my multiplication was right, I could not be satisfied till I had made and examined the figure; not that I do not admire algebra when applied to abstract quantities, but when used to demonstrate dimensions I wished to see the operation worked out by lines; otherwise I could not rightly comprehend it.

After this came Latin: it was my most painful study, and one in which I never made great progress. I began with the Port-Royal method, but without success. Those barbarous verses sickened me, nor could my ear endure them. I lost myself in a crowd of rules, and, in studying the last, forgot all that preceded it. A study of words is not calculated for a man without memory, and it was principally an endeavour to make my memory more retentive that urged me obstinately to persist in this study, which at length I was obliged to relinquish. As I understood enough to read an easy author by the aid of a dictionary, I followed that method, and found it succeed tolerably well. I likewise applied myself to translation, not by writing, but mentally, and kept to it. By exercise and

perseverance I attained to read Latin authors easily, but have never been able to speak or write that language, which has frequently embarrassed me when I have found myself, I know not by what means, enrolled among men of letters. Another inconvenience that arose from this manner of learning was that I never understood prosody, much less the rules of versification; yet, anxious to understand the harmony of the language, both in prose and verse, I have made many efforts to attain it, but am convinced that without a master it is almost impossible. Having learned the composition of the hexameter, which is the easiest of all verses, I had the patience to measure out the greater part of Virgil into feet and quantity, and whenever I was dubious whether a syllable was long or short, immediately consulted my Virgil. It may easily be conceived that I ran into many errors in consequence of those licences permitted by the rules of versification. It is certain that, if there is an advantage in studying alone, there are also great inconveniences and inconceivable labour, as I know better than any one.

Before noon I quitted my books, and, if dinner was not ready, paid my friends the pigeons a visit, or worked in the garden till it was, and when I heard myself called ran very willingly, and with a good appetite, to partake of it, for it is very remarkable that, let me be ever so indisposed, my appetite never fails. We dined very agreeably, chatting till Mamma could eat. Two or three times a week, when it was fine, we drank our coffee in a cool, shady arbour

behind the house, that I had decorated with hops, and which was very refreshing during the heat; we usually passed an hour in viewing our flowers and vegetables, or in conversation relative to our manner of life, which greatly increased the pleasure of it. I had another little family at the end of the garden; these were several hives of bees, which I never failed to visit once a day, and was frequently accompanied by Mamma. I was greatly interested in their labour, and amused myself in seeing them return from their quest of booty, their little thighs so loaded that they could hardly walk. At first, curiosity made me indiscreet, and they stung me several times, but afterwards we were so well acquainted that, let me approach as near as I would, they never molested me, though the hives were full and the bees ready to swarm. At these times I have been surrounded, having them on my hands and face without suffering a single sting. All animals are distrustful of man, and with reason; but, when once assured he does not mean to injure them, their confidence becomes so great that he must be worse than a barbarian who abuses it.

After this I returned to my books; but my afternoon employment ought rather to bear the name of recreation and amusement than of labour and study. I have never been able to bear application after dinner, and in general any kind of attention is painful to me during the heat of the day. I employed myself, it is true, but without restraint or rule, and read without studying. What I most attended to at these

times was history and geography, and as these did not require attention to disputed points, made as much progress in them as my weak memory would permit. I had an inclination to study Père Pétau, and launched into the mists of chronology, but was disgusted at the critical part, which I found had neither bottom nor banks; this made me prefer the more exact measurement of time and the course of the celestial bodies. I should even have contracted a fondness for astronomy had I been in possession of instruments, but was obliged to content myself with some of the elements of that art, learned from books, and a few rude observations made with a telescope, sufficient only to give me a general idea of the situation of the heavenly bodies; for my short sight is insufficient to distinguish the stars without the help of a glass. I recollect an adventure on this subject, the remembrance of which has often diverted me. I had bought a celestial planisphere to study the constellations by, and, having fixed it on a frame, when the nights were fine, and the sky clear, I went into the garden; and fixing the frame on four sticks about as tall as myself, which I drove into the ground, turned the planisphere downwards, and contrived to light it by means of a candle, which I put into a pail to prevent the wind from blowing it out, and then placed it in the centre of the above-mentioned four supports; this done, I examined the stars with my glass, and, from time to time referring to my planisphere, endeavoured to distinguish the various constellations. I think I

have before observed that Monsieur Noiret's garden was on a terrace; all that was done there was visible from the road. One night some country-people, passing by very late, saw me in a grotesque costume, busily employed in these observations. The light, which struck directly on the planisphere, proceeding from a cause they could not divine, the candle being concealed by the sides of the pail, the four stakes supporting a large paper in a frame, marked over with uncouth figures, with the motion of the telescope, which they saw turning to and fro, gave the whole an air of conjuration that struck them with horror and amazement. My figure was by no means calculated to dispel their fears: a flappel hat put on over my nightcap, and a short wadded cloak about my shoulders, which Mamma had obliged me to put on, presented in their idea the image of a real sorcerer. Being near midnight, they made no doubt but this was the beginning of some witches' Sabbath; and, having no curiosity to pry further into these mysteries, they fled with all possible speed, awakened their neighbours, and described this most dreadful vision. The story spread so fast that the next day the whole neighbourhood was informed that a *sabbat* was held in the garden that belonged to Monsieur Noiret, and I am ignorant what might have been the consequences of this rumour if one of the countrymen who had been witness to my conjurations had not the same day carried his complaint to two Jesuits, who frequently came to visit us, and who, without

knowing the foundation of the story, undeceived and satisfied them. These Jesuits told us the whole affair; I acquainted them with the cause of it, and we laughed heartily. However, to obviate future accidents, I resolved for the future to make my observations without light, and consult my planisphere in the house. Those who have read of Venetian magic in my *Lettres de la Montagne*, may find that I long since had the reputation of being a conjurer.

Such was the life I led at Les Charmettes when I had no rural employments, for they ever had the preference, and in those that did not exceed my strength I worked like a peasant; but my extreme weakness left me little merit except goodwill; besides, I wished to do two things at once, and therefore did neither well. I obstinately persisted in forcing my memory to retain a good deal by heart, and, for that purpose, I always carried some book with me, which, while at work, I studied and re-studied. I am really amazed that the fatigue of these vain and continual efforts did not end by rendering me entirely stupid. I must have learned and re-learned the Eclogues of Virgil twenty times over, though at this time I cannot recollect a single line of them. I have lost or spoiled a great number of books by a custom I had of carrying them with me into the dove-house, the garden, orchard, or vineyard, when, being busy about something else, I laid my book at the foot of a tree or on the hedge; wherever it was I forgot to return for it, and often at the end of a fortnight found it rotted to pieces, or eaten by

the ants or snails. This ardour for learning became so far a madness that it rendered me almost stupid, and I was perpetually muttering some passage or other to myself.

The writings of Port-Royal, and those of the Oratoire, being what I most read, had made me half a Jansenist, and, notwithstanding all my confidence, their harsh theology sometimes alarmed me. A dread of hell, which till then I had never much apprehended, by little and little disturbed my security, and, had not Mamma tranquillised my soul, would at length have been too much for me. My confessor, who was hers likewise, contributed all in his power to keep me tranquil. This was a Jesuit named Père Hemet, a good and wise old man, whose memory I shall ever hold in veneration. Though a Jesuit, he had the simplicity of a child, and his manners, less relaxed than gentle, were precisely what was necessary to balance the melancholy impressions made on me by Jansenism. This good man and his companion, Père Coppier, came frequently to visit us at Les Charmettes, though the road was very rough and tedious for men of their age. These visits were very comfortable to me, which may the Almighty return to their souls, for they were so old that I cannot suppose them yet living. I sometimes went to see them at Chambéri, became acquainted by degrees at their convent, and had free access to the library. The remembrance of that happy time is so connected with the idea of those Jesuits, that I love one on account of the other, and, though I have ever thought their doctrines

dangerous, could never find myself in a disposition to hate them cordially.

I should like to know whether there ever passed such childish notions in the hearts of other men as sometimes do in mine. In the midst of my studies, and of a life as innocent as man could lead, notwithstanding every persuasion to the contrary, the dread of hell frequently tormented me. I asked myself, 'What state am I in? Should I die at this instant, must I be damned?' According to my Jansenists the matter was indubitable, but according to my conscience it appeared quite the contrary. Ever terrified and floating in this cruel uncertainty, I had recourse to the most laughable expedients to resolve my doubts, for which I would willingly shut up any man as a lunatic, should I see him practise the same folly. One day, meditating on this melancholy subject, I exercised myself in throwing stones at the trunks of trees, with my usual dexterity, that is to say, without hitting any of them. In the height of this charming exercise, it entered my mind to make a kind of prognostic that might calm my inquietude. I said, 'I will throw this stone at the tree facing me; if I hit my mark, I will consider it as a sign of salvation; if I miss, as a token of damnation.' While I said this, I threw the stone with a trembling hand and beating heart, but so happily that it fairly struck the body of the tree, which truly was not a difficult matter, for I had taken care to choose one that was very large and very near me. From that moment I have never doubted my salvation. I

know not, on recollecting this trait, whether I ought to laugh or shudder at myself. Ye great geniuses, who surely laugh at my folly, congratulate yourselves on your superior wisdom, but insult not my unhappiness, for I swear to you that I feel it most sensibly.

These troubles, these alarms, inseparable perhaps from devotion, were only at intervals; in general I was tranquil, and the impression made on my soul, by the idea of approaching death, was less that of melancholy than a peaceful languor, which even had its pleasures. I have found among my old papers a kind of congratulation and exhortation which I made to myself on dying at an age when I had the courage to meet death with serenity, without having experienced any great evils, either of body or mind. How right I was in this! A preconception of what I had to suffer made me fear to live, and it seemed that I foresaw the fate which must attend my future days. I have never been so near wisdom as during this happy period, when I felt no great remorse for the past, nor tormenting fear for the future—the reigning sentiment of my soul being the enjoyment of the present. Religious people usually possess a lively sensuality of a minor sort, which makes them highly enjoy those innocent pleasures that are allowed them. Worldlings—I know not why—impute this to them as a crime; or rather, I well know the cause of this imputation: it is because they envy others the enjoyment of those simple delights for which they have lost the relish. I had these inclinations, and found it charming

to gratify them in security of conscience. My yet inexperienced heart surrendered itself to all with the calm happiness of a child, or rather, if I dare use the expression, with the raptures of an angel; for in reality these pure delights are as serene as those of paradise. Dinners on the grass at Montagnole, suppers in our arbour, gathering in the fruits, the vintage, peeling hemp with our servants—all these were so many holidays, in which Mamma took as much pleasure as myself. Solitary walks afforded yet purer pleasure, because in them our hearts expanded with greater freedom: one particularly marks an epoch in my memory; it was on the Day of Saint Louis, whose name Mamma bore. We set out together early and unattended, after having heard a mass at break of day in a chapel adjoining our house, said by a Carmelite, who attended for that purpose. As I proposed walking over the hills opposite our dwelling, which we had not yet visited, we sent our provisions on before, the excursion being likely to last the whole day. Mamma, though rather corpulent, did not walk ill, and we rambled from hill to hill and wood to wood, sometimes in the sun, but oftener in the shade, resting from time to time, and regardless how the hours stole away; speaking of ourselves, of our union, of the sweetness of our lot, and offering up prayers for its duration, which were never granted. Everything conspired to augment our happiness: it had rained recently, there was no dust, the brooks were full and rapid, a gentle breeze agitated the leaves, the air was pure, the horizon

free from clouds, serenity reigned in the sky as in our hearts. Our dinner was prepared at a peasant's house, and shared with him and his family, whose benedictions we received. These poor Savoyards—such worthy people! After dinner we regained the shade, and while I was picking up bits of dried sticks to boil our coffee, Mamma amused herself with herborising among the bushes, and, taking the flowers I had gathered for her in my way, she made me remark in their construction a thousand natural beauties, which greatly amused me, and which ought to have given me a taste for botany; but the time was not yet come, and my attention was arrested by too many other studies. Besides this, an idea struck me, which diverted my thoughts from flowers and plants: the situation of my mind at that moment, all that we had said or done that day, every object that had struck me, brought to my remembrance the kind of waking dream I had at Annecy seven or eight years before, and of which I have given an account in its place. The similarity was so striking that it affected me even to tears. In a transport of tenderness I embraced this dear friend. 'Mamma, Mamma,' I exclaimed passionately, 'this day has long since been promised me; I can see nothing beyond it: my happiness, by your means, is at its height; may it never decrease! may it continue as long as I am sensible of its value—then it can only finish with my life.'

Thus happily passed my days, and the more so since, perceiving nothing that could disturb them, I firmly believed that my happiness could only

AT LES CHARMETTES

end with my life; not that the cause of my former uneasiness had absolutely ceased, but I saw it take another course which I directed with my utmost care to useful objects, that the remedy might accompany the evil. Mamma naturally loved the country, and this taste did not cool while with me. By little and little she contracted a fondness for rustic employments, wished to make the most of her land, and had in that particular a knowledge which she practised with pleasure. Not satisfied with what belonged to the house, she hired first a field, then a meadow, transferring her enterprising humour to the objects of agriculture, and, instead of remaining unemployed in the house, was in the way of becoming a complete farmer. I was not greatly pleased to see this passion increase, and endeavoured all I could to oppose it; for I was certain she would be deceived, and that her liberal, extravagant disposition would infallibly carry her expenses beyond her profits. However, I consoled myself by thinking the produce could not be useless, and would, at least, help her to live. Of all the projects she could form, this appeared the least ruinous. Without regarding it, therefore, in the light she did, as a profitable scheme, I considered it as a perpetual employment, which would keep her from ruinous enterprises, and out of the reach of impostors. With this idea, I ardently wished to recover my health and strength, that I might superintend her affairs, overlook her labourers, or rather be the principal one myself. The exercise this naturally obliged me to take, with the relaxation it procured me

from books and study, was serviceable to my health.

[1737-1741.] The winter following, Barillot, returning from Italy, brought me some books, and among others the *Bontempi* and the *Cartella per Musica* of Père Banchieri. These gave me a taste for the history of music and for theoretical researches in that pleasing art. Barillot remained some time with us, and, as I had been of age for some months, I determined to go to Geneva the following spring, and demand my mother's inheritance, or at least that part of it which belonged to me, till it could be ascertained what had become of my brother. This plan was executed as it had been resolved. I went to Geneva; my father met me there, for long since he had occasionally visited Geneva without being molested, though the decree that had been pronounced against him had never been reversed; but being esteemed for his courage, and respected for his probity, they pretended to have forgotten the affair; and the magistrates, employed with the great project that came to light some little time after, were not willing to alarm the citizens by recalling to their memory, at an improper time, this instance of their former partiality.

I apprehended that I should meet with difficulties on account of having changed my religion, but none occurred, the laws of Geneva being less harsh in that particular than those of Berne, where whoever changes his religion loses not only his citizenship but his property.

My rights, however, were not disputed, but I found my patrimony, I know not how, reduced to very little; and, though it was known almost to a certainty that my brother was dead, yet, as there was no legal proof, I could not lay claim to his share, which I left without regret to my father, who enjoyed it as long as he lived. No sooner were the necessary formalities adjusted, and I had received my money, some of which I expended in books, than I flew to lay the remainder at Mamma's feet. My heart beat with joy during the journey, and the moment in which I gave the money into her hands was to me a thousand times more delightful than that which gave it into mine. She received this with the simplicity common to great souls, who, doing similar actions without effort, see them without surprise. Indeed, with equal simplicity, this sum was almost all expended for my use, and it would have been employed in the same manner had it come from any other quarter.

Meanwhile, my health was not yet re-established; on the contrary, I decayed visibly, was pale as death, and reduced to an absolute skeleton. The beating of my arteries was extreme, my palpitations very frequent. I was sensible of a continual oppression, and my weakness became at length so great that I could scarcely move without pain or step quickly without danger of suffocation, stoop without vertigoes, or lift even the smallest weight, which reduced me to the most tormenting inaction for a man so naturally active as myself. It is

certain that my disorder was in a great measure hypochondriacal. The vapours is a malady common to people in fortunate situations: the tears I frequently shed without reason; the lively alarms I felt on the falling of a leaf, or the fluttering of a bird; inequality of humour in the calm of a most pleasing life—all marked that weariness of well-being which, so to speak, carries sensibility to extravagance. We are so little formed for felicity that when the soul and body do not suffer together, they must necessarily endure separate inconveniences, the good state of the one being almost always injurious to the happiness of the other. Had all the pleasures of life courted me, my weakened frame would not have permitted the enjoyment of them, without my being able to particularise the real seat of my complaint; yet in the decline of life, after having encountered very serious and real evils, my body seemed to regain its strength, as if on purpose to encounter additional misfortunes; and, at the moment I write this, though infirm, near sixty, and overwhelmed with every kind of sorrow, I feel more ability to suffer than I ever possessed for enjoyment, when in the very flower of my age and in the bosom of real happiness.

To complete me, I had mingled a little physiology among my other readings. I set about studying anatomy, and considering the multitude, movement, and wonderful construction of the various parts that composed my frame. My apprehensions were instantly increased; I expected to feel the machinery

deranged twenty times a day, and, far from being surprised to find myself dying, was astonished that I yet existed! I could not read the description of any malady without thinking it mine, and, had I not been already indisposed, I am certain I should have become so from this study. Finding in every disease symptoms similar to mine, I fancied I had them all, and at length gained one more troublesome than any I yet suffered, which I had thought myself delivered from: this was a violent inclination to seek a cure, which it is very difficult to suppress when once a person begins reading medical books. By searching, reflecting, and comparing, I became persuaded that the foundation of my complaint was a polypus at the heart, and Salomon appeared to coincide with the idea. Reasonably, this opinion should have confirmed my former resolution. This, however, was not the case; on the contrary, I exerted every power of my understanding in search of a remedy for a polypus at the heart, resolving to undertake this marvellous cure. In a journey which Anet had made to Montpellier, to see the botanic garden there, and visit Monsieur Sauvages, the demonstrator, he had been informed that Monsieur Fizes had cured a similar polypus. Mamma, recollecting this circumstance, mentioned it to me, and nothing more was necessary to inspire me with a desire to consult Monsieur Fizes. The hope of recovery gave me courage and strength to undertake the journey. The money from Geneva furnished the means. Mamma, far

from dissuading, entreated me to go. Behold me, therefore, set out for Montpellier!

But it was not necessary to go so far to obtain the cure I needed. Finding the motion of a horse too fatiguing, I had hired a chaise at Grenoble, and on entering Moirans five or six other chaises arrived in rank after mine. For the moment it was indeed the adventure of the *brancards*.[1] The greater part of these were in the train of a newly married lady called Madame du Colombier; with her was a Madame de Larnage, not so young or handsome as the former, yet not less amiable, and who from Romans, where the bride was to alight, was to pursue her route to Saint-Andiol, near the Pont-Saint-Esprit. With my known timidity it will not be conjectured that I was very ready at forming an acquaintance with these fine ladies and the company that attended them; but travelling the same road, lodging at the same inns, and being obliged to eat at the same table, if I would not be thought an unsociable monster, the acquaintance was unavoidable. It was formed then, and even sooner than I desired, for all this bustle was by no means convenient to a person in ill-health, particularly to one of my humour. Curiosity renders these artful creatures extremely insinuating; they accomplish their design of becoming acquainted with a man by endeavouring to turn his brain, and this was precisely what happened to me. Madame du Colombier was too much surrounded by her young fops to have any oppor-

[1] See vol. i. p. 207.

tunity of paying much attention to me; besides, it was not worth while, as we were to separate in so short a time; but Madame de Larnage, less besieged than her young friend, had to provide herself for the remainder of the journey. Behold me, then, attacked by Madame de Larnage, and adieu to poor Jean-Jacques, or rather farewell to fever, vapours, and polypus —all vanished in her presence, save some few palpitations of which she would not cure me. The ill state of my health was the first subject of our conversation; they saw I was indisposed, knew I was going to Montpellier, but my air and manner certainly did not exhibit the appearance of a libertine, since it was clear by what followed that they did not suspect I was going there for a reason that carries many that road. Though a poor state of health does not form a good recommendation for a man in the eyes of ladies, it nevertheless rendered me interesting to these. In the morning they sent to inquire how I was and invite me to take chocolate with them, and when I made my appearance, asked how I had passed the night. Once, according to my praiseworthy custom of speaking without thought, I replied, 'I did not know,' which answer made them conclude I was a fool; but, on questioning me further, the examination turned out so far to my advantage, that I rather rose in their opinion, and I once heard Madame du Colombier say to her friend, 'He is not sufficiently acquainted with the world, but he is amiable.' These words were a great encouragement, and assisted me in rendering myself so.

As we became more familiar, it was natural to give each other some little account of whence we came, and who we were. This embarrassed me greatly, for I was sensible that in good company and among women of spirit the very name of a new convert would utterly undo me. I know not by what whimsicality I resolved to pass for an Englishman; however, in consequence of that determination I gave myself out for a Jacobite, and was readily believed. I called myself Dudding, and they called me Monsieur Dudding. A cursed Marquis de Torignan, who was one of the company, an invalid like myself, old and ill-tempered to boot, took it into his head to begin a long conversation with Monsieur Dudding. He spoke of King James, of the Pretender, and the Court of St. Germain. I sat on thorns the whole time, for I was totally unacquainted with all these, except what little I had picked up in the writings of Comte Hamilton, and from the gazettes; however, I made such fortunate use of the little I did know as to extricate myself from this dilemma, happy in not being questioned on the English language, of which I did not know a single word.

The company were all very agreeable, we looked forward to the moment of separation with regret, and therefore made snails' journeys. We arrived one Sunday at Saint-Marcellin. Madame de Larnage would go to mass; I accompanied her, and had nearly ruined all my affairs, for I acted my part as usual, and by my modest, reserved countenance during the service

she concluded me a bigot, and conceived a very ill opinion of me, as I learned from her own account two days after. It required a great deal of gallantry subsequently to efface this ill impression, or rather Madame de Larnage, who was not easily disheartened, determined to risk the first advances, and see how I should behave. She made several, and, far from being vain of my figure, I thought she was making sport of me; full of this ridiculous idea, there was no folly of which I was not guilty. It was worse than the Marquis in *Le Legs*. Madame de Larnage persisted in making so many inciting and tender remarks that a much wiser man than myself could hardly have taken them seriously. The more obvious her advances were, the more I was confirmed in my belief, and, what increased my torment, I found I was really in love with her. I frequently said to myself, and sometimes to her, sighing, 'Ah! why is not all this real? —then should I be the most fortunate of men.' I am inclined to think my stupidity did but whet her fancy; she would not be defeated.

We left Madame du Colombier and her following at Romans; after which, Madame de Larnage, the Marquis de Torignan, and myself continued our route slowly, and in the most agreeable manner. The Marquis, though indisposed and rather ill-humoured, was pretty good company, but was not well pleased in eating bread while meat was roasting; for Madame de Larnage took so little care to conceal her inclinations, that he perceived it sooner than I did, and his sarcasms must have given me that

confidence I could not presume to take from the kindness of the lady, if by a surmise, which no one but myself could have blundered on, I had not imagined they perfectly understood each other, and were agreed to turn my passion into ridicule. This foolish idea completed my stupidity, making me act the most ridiculous part, while, had I listened to the feelings of my heart, I might have been performing one far more brilliant. I am astonished that Madame de Larnage was not disgusted at my folly, and did not discard me with disdain; but she had sufficient knowledge of the world to perceive that there was more bashfulness than indifference in my composition.

She succeeded at length in making me understand, though not without trouble. We arrived at Valence to dinner, and according to our usual custom passed the remainder of the day there. We lodged out of the city, at the Saint-Jacques; I shall never forget this inn, nor the chamber therein which Madame de Larnage occupied. After dinner, Madame de Larnage proposed a walk. She knew the Marquis was no walker, consequently this was an excellent plan for a tête-à-tête, which she was predetermined to make the most of, for time and opportunity grew precious. While we were walking round the city by the side of the moats, I entered on a long history of my complaint, to which she answered in so tender an accent, frequently pressing my arm, which she held to her heart, that it required all my stupidity not to be convinced of the sincerity of her attachment; and

yet, strange as it may seem, I too was deeply moved. I have already observed that she was amiable; love rendered her charming, giving back to her all the loveliness of youth; and she managed her advances with so much art, that they were sufficient to have seduced the most insensible. I was therefore in very uneasy circumstances, and frequently on the point of making a declaration; but the dread of offending her, and the still greater fear of being laughed at, ridiculed, made table-talk, and complimented on my enterprise by the satirical Marquis had such unconquerable power over me that, though ashamed of my ridiculous bashfulness, I could not take courage to surmount it. I was on the rack; I had already exhausted my pretty conventional phrases, of which I felt the absurdity at such a time; and, not knowing how to look, or what to say, continued silent, giving the finest opportunity in the world for that ridicule I so much dreaded. Happily, Madame de Larnage took a kinder resolution, and suddenly interrupted this silence by throwing her arm around my neck, while at the same instant her lips spoke too plainly to mine to be any longer misunderstood. The crisis could not have come at a happier moment; I became responsive. She had given me that confidence, the want of which has almost always prevented me from appearing myself. I was myself now: never did my eyes, my senses, my heart, my lips express themselves so frankly and fully. Never did I make better reparation for my mistakes; and, if this little conquest had cost Madame

de Larnage some difficulties, I have reason to believe she did not regret them.

Were I to live a hundred years, I should ever remember with pleasure this charming woman. I say charming, for, though neither young nor beautiful, she was neither old nor ugly, having nothing in her appearance that could prevent her wit and accomplishments from producing all their effects. Unlike the generality of women, her face was the least youthful-looking of her personal qualities, and I fear the use of rouge had spoiled it. She had her reasons for being a little free; it was thus that she made a lover understand her merit. It was possible to see her without falling in love, but the man to whom she resigned herself could not fail to adore her; which proves, in my opinion, that she was not generally so prodigal of her favours. It is true, her inclination for me was so sudden and lively that it scarce appears excusable; though, in the short but charming interval I passed with her, I had reason to believe, from the restraint she sometimes insisted on, that, notwithstanding her amorous temperament, she studied my health more even than her own pleasures.

Our good intelligence did not escape the penetration of the Marquis—not that he discontinued his usual raillery; on the contrary, he treated me as a sighing, hopeless swain, languishing under the rigours of his mistress. Not a word, smile, or look escaped him by which I could imagine he suspected my happiness; and I should have thought him completely deceived, had not Madame de Larnage, who was more

clear-sighted than myself, told me that he was aware of the matter, but was a well-bred man; and, indeed, it was impossible to behave with more attention or greater civility than he constantly paid me, notwithstanding his satirical sallies, especially after my success, which, as he was unacquainted with my stupidity, he perhaps gave me the honour of achieving. It has already been seen that he was mistaken in this particular; but no matter, I profited by his error, for, being conscious that the laugh was on my side, I took all his sallies in good part, and sometimes parried them with tolerable success; for, proud to display before her that wit which Madame de Larnage had bestowed upon me, I no longer appeared the same man.

We were in a country and in a season of plenty, and had everywhere excellent cheer, thanks to the kind attention of the Marquis; though I would willingly have relinquished this advantage to have been better satisfied with the situation of our chambers; but he always sent his footman in advance to provide them; and, whether of his own accord, or by the order of his master, the rogue always took care that the Marquis's chamber should be close by Madame de Larnage's, while mine was at the farther end of the house; but that made no great difference, or perhaps it rendered our rendezvous the more charming. This happiness lasted four or five days, during which time I was intoxicated with delight, which I tasted pure and serene without any alloy, an advantage I could never boast before; and, I may add, it

is owing to Madame de Larnage that I did not go out of the world without having tasted real pleasure.

If the sentiment I felt for her was not precisely love, it was at least a very tender return of that she testified for me; it was a sensuousness so glowing in the enjoyment, an intimacy so sweet in our conversations, that it possessed all the delights of love, without that kind of delirium which affects the brain, and tends to diminish happiness. I never experienced true love but once in my life, and that was not with her, neither did I feel that affection for her which I had felt, and yet continued to feel, for Madame de Warens; but, for this very reason, I possessed her a hundred times more completely. When with Madame de Warens, my felicity was always disturbed by a secret sadness, a compunction of heart, which I found it difficult to surmount. Instead of being delighted at the acquisition of so much happiness, I could not help reproaching myself for contributing to render her I loved unworthy. On the contrary, with Madame de Larnage, proud of my virility and felicity, I gave way joyfully and confidently to my desires, while my triumph redoubled every other charm.

I do not recollect exactly where we quitted the Marquis, who resided in this country, but I know we were alone on our arrival at Montélimar, where Madame de Larnage made her chambermaid get into my chaise, and accommodated me with a seat in hers. It will easily be believed that travelling in this manner was

by no means displeasing to us, and that I should be very much puzzled to give any account of the country we passed through. She had some business at Montélimar, which detained her there two or three days; during this time she quitted me but one quarter of an hour, for a visit she could not avoid, which embarrassed her with a number of invitations she had no inclination to accept, and therefore excused herself by pleading some indisposition; though she took care this should not prevent our walking together every day, in the most charming country, and under the finest sky imaginable. Oh, those three days! What reason have I to regret them! Never did such happiness return again.

The amours of a journey cannot be very durable. It was necessary we should part, and I must confess it was almost time; not that I was satiated by my happiness, for my attachment increased daily, but, in spite of the lady's discretion, little more remained to me but goodwill. We endeavoured to comfort each other for the pain of parting by forming plans for our reunion; and it was concluded that—the recent regimen having been so beneficial to me—after staying five or six weeks at Montpellier, which would give Madame de Larnage time to prepare for my reception in such a manner as to prevent scandal, I should return to Saint-Andiol, and spend the winter under her direction. She gave me ample instruction on what it was necessary I should know, on what it would be proper to say, and how I should conduct myself. Meanwhile we were to correspond by letter.

She spoke much and earnestly on the care of my health, conjured me to consult some skilful physicians, and be attentive in following their prescriptions, she herself promising to make me do so when with her, however rigid they might be. I believe her concern was sincere, for she loved me, and gave proofs of her affection less equivocal than the prodigality of her favours: judging by my mode of travelling that I was not in very affluent circumstances, on our parting, though not rich herself, she would have had me share the contents of her purse, which she had brought pretty well furnished from Grenoble, and it was with great difficulty I could make her put up with a denial. In a word, we parted, my heart full of her idea, and leaving in hers, if I am not mistaken, a firm attachment to me.

While pursuing the remainder of my journey, remembrance ran over everything that had passed from the commencement of it, and I was well satisfied at finding myself alone in a comfortable chaise, where I could ruminate at ease on the pleasures I had enjoyed, and those which awaited my return. I only thought of Saint-Andiol and of the delightful life I was to lead there. I saw nothing but Madame de Larnage or what related to her; the whole universe besides was nothing to me—even Mamma was forgotten! I set about combining all the details by which Madame de Larnage had endeavoured to give me in advance an idea of her house, of the neighbourhood, of her connections and manner of life. She had a daughter,

whom she had often described in the warmest terms of maternal affection. This daughter was fifteen, lively, charming, and of an amiable disposition. Madame de Larnage promised me her friendship; I had not forgotten that promise, and was curious to know how Mademoiselle de Larnage would treat her mother's dear friend. These were the subjects of my reveries from Pont-Saint-Esprit to Remoulin. I had been advised to visit the Pont du Gard, and did not fail to do so. After a breakfast at which I ate some excellent figs, I hired a guide, and set out. Hitherto I had seen none of the remaining monuments of Roman magnificence, and I expected to find this worthy the hands by which it was constructed; for once, the reality surpassed my expectation. This was the only time in my life it ever did so, and Romans alone could have produced that effect. The view of this noble and sublime work struck me the more forcibly from being in the midst of a desert, where silence and solitude render the object more striking, and admiration more lively, for, though called a bridge, it is nothing more than an aqueduct. One cannot help exclaiming, What strength could have transported these enormous stones so far from any quarry? And what motive could have united the labours of so many millions of men, in a place that no one inhabited? I passed over the three stages of this superb edifice with a veneration which made me reluctant to trample on its stones. In the echo of my footsteps under these immense arches I seemed to hear

the mighty voices of their builders. I felt myself a mere insect, lost in this vastness, and yet, with all this sense of littleness, experienced an elevation of the soul, and murmured with a sigh, 'Why was I not born a Roman?' I remained whole hours in the most ravishing contemplation, and returned pensive and thoughtful to my inn. This reverie was by no means favourable to Madame de Larnage; she had taken care to forewarn me against the girls of Montpellier, but not against the Pont du Gard. It is impossible to anticipate every contingency.

On my arrival at Nîmes, I went to see the Amphitheatre, which is a far more magnificent work than the Pont du Gard, yet it made a much less impression on me, perhaps because my admiration had been already exhausted on the former object, or that the situation of the latter, in the midst of a city, was less proper to excite it. This vast and superb circus is surrounded by small dirty houses, while others yet smaller and dirtier fill up the arena in such a manner that the whole produces an unequal and confused effect, in which regret and indignation stifle pleasure and surprise. I have since seen the Amphitheatre at Verona, which is a vast deal smaller and less beautiful than that at Nîmes, but preserved with all possible care and neatness, by which means alone it made a much stronger and more agreeable impression on me. The French pay no regard to these things, respect no monument of antiquity; ever eager to undertake, they never finish or conserve.

I was so much better, and had gained such an appetite by exercise, that I stopped a whole day at the Pont de Lunel, for the sake of good entertainment and company, this being deservedly esteemed at that time the best inn in Europe, for those who kept it, knowing how to make its fortunate situation turn to advantage, took care to provide both abundance and variety. It was really curious to find in a lonely country-house a table every day furnished with sea and fresh-water fish, excellent game, and choice wines, served up with all the attention and care which are only to be expected among the great or opulent, and all this for thirty-five sous each person. But the Pont de Lunel did not long remain on this footing, for the proprietor, presuming too much on its reputation, at length lost it entirely.

During this journey I really forgot my complaints, but recollected them again on my arrival at Montpellier. My vapours were absolutely gone, but every other complaint remained, and though custom had rendered them less troublesome, they were still sufficient to make any one who had been suddenly seized with them suppose himself attacked by some mortal disease. In effect, they were rather alarming than painful, and made the mind suffer more than the body, though it apparently threatened the latter with destruction. While my attention was called off by the vivacity of my passions, I paid no attention to my health; but, as my complaints were not altogether imaginary, I thought of them seriously when the

tumult had subsided. Recollecting the salutary advice of Madame de Larnage, and the cause of my journey, I consulted the most famous practitioners, particularly Monsieur Fizes, and, through an excess of precaution, boarded at the house of a doctor—an Irishman named Fitz-Morris. This person boarded a number of young gentlemen who were studying physic, and, what rendered his house very commodious for an invalid, Monsieur Fitz-Morris contented himself with a moderate pension for provision and lodging, and took nothing of his boarders for attendance as a physician. He undertook to execute the orders of Monsieur Fizes, and endeavour to re-establish my health. He certainly acquitted himself very well in this employment; as to regimen, indigestions were not to be gained at his table; and though I am not much hurt at privations of that kind, the objects of comparison were so near, that I could not help thinking with myself sometimes that Monsieur de Torignan was a much better purveyor than Monsieur Fitz-Morris; notwithstanding, as there was no danger of dying with hunger, and all the youths were gay and good-humoured, I believe this manner of living was really serviceable, and prevented my falling into those languors to which I had been subject. I passed the morning in taking medicines, particularly some kind of waters (I believe they were those of Vals), and in writing to Madame de Larnage; for the correspondence was regularly kept up, and Rousseau undertook to receive letters for his friend Dudding. At noon I took a walk to

La Canourgue, with some of our young boarders, who were all very good lads; after this we assembled for dinner; when this was over, an affair of importance employed most of us till night—this was going a little way out of town to take our afternoon's collation, and make up two or three parties at mall. As I had neither strength nor skill, I did not play myself, but I betted on the games, and, interested for the success of my wager, followed the players and their balls over rough and stony roads, procuring by this means both an agreeable and salutary exercise. We took our afternoon's refreshment at an inn outside the city. I need not observe that these meetings were extremely merry, but must not omit that they were equally innocent, though the girls of the house were very pretty. Monsieur Fitz-Morris, who was a great mall-player himself, was our president, and I can declare, notwithstanding the ill reputation generally bestowed on students, that I found more virtuous dispositions among these youths than could easily be found among an equal number of men; they were rather noisy than fond of wine, and more merry than licentious. I accustomed myself so much to this mode of life, and it accorded so much with my humour, that I should have been very well content with a continuance of it. Several of my fellow-boarders were Irish, from whom I endeavoured to learn some English words, as a precaution for my visit to Saint-Andiol. The time now drew near for my departure thither; every letter Madame de Larnage wrote, she entreated me

not to delay it, and I prepared to obey her. I was convinced that the physicians, who understood nothing of my disorder, looked on my complaint as imaginary, and treated me accordingly with their *squine*, their waters and whey. In this respect physicians and philosophers differ widely from theologians, admitting the truth only of what they can explain, and making their knowledge the measure of possibilities. These gentlemen understood nothing of my illness, which did not absolutely invalidate me, and who would presume to doubt the profound skill of a physician? I plainly saw that they only meant to keep me amused, and make me swallow my money; and, judging their substitute at Saint-Andiol would do me quite as much service, and more agreeably, I resolved to give her the preference; full, therefore, of this wise resolution, I quitted Montpellier.

I set off towards the end of November, after a stay of six weeks or two months in that city, where I left a dozen louis, without either my health or understanding being the better for it, if I except a short course of anatomy begun under Monsieur Fitz-Morris, which I was soon obliged to abandon owing to the horrible stench of the bodies he dissected, which I found it impossible to endure.

Not thoroughly satisfied in my own mind as to the rectitude of this expedition, as I advanced towards Pont-Saint-Esprit, which was equally the road to Saint-Andiol and to Chambéri, I began to reflect on Mamma, the remembrance of whose letters, though less frequent than those

of Madame de Larnage, awakened in my heart a remorse that passion had stifled in the first part of my journey, but which became so lively on my return that, setting a just estimate on the love of pleasure, I found myself in such a situation of mind that I could listen wholly to the voice of reason. Besides, in acting the part of an adventurer, I might be less fortunate than I had been in the beginning; for it was only necessary that in all Saint-Andiol there should be one person who had been in England, or who knew the English, or anything of their language, to prove me an impostor. The family of Madame de Larnage might not be pleased with me, and would, perhaps, treat me impolitely; her daughter, of whom I thought too frequently, made me uneasy. I trembled lest I should fall in love with this girl, and that very fear had already half done the business. Was I going, in return for the mother's bounties, to seek the ruin of the daughter,—to sow dissension, dishonour, scandal, and hell itself, in her family? The very idea struck me with horror, and I took a firm resolution to combat and vanquish this unhappy attachment, should I be so unfortunate as to experience it. But why expose myself to this combat? How wretched the condition of one living with a mother, of whom he grows weary, and enamoured of her daughter, to whom he dares not disclose his passion! Why rush upon misfortunes, affronts, and remorse, for the sake of pleasures whose greatest charm was already exhausted? For I was sensible that this attachment had lost its first

vivacity. The relish for pleasure remained, but passion had fled. With these thoughts were mingled reflections relative to my situation and my duty to my good and generous Mamma, who, already loaded with debts, would become more so from the foolish expenses I was running into, and whom I was deceiving so unworthily. This reproach at length became so keen that it triumphed in the end; and, on approaching Saint-Esprit, I formed the resolution to refrain from stopping at Saint-Andiol, and continue my journey right forward to Chambéri. I executed this resolution courageously, with some sighs I confess, but with the heartfelt satisfaction, which I enjoyed for the first time in my life, of saying, 'I merit my own esteem, and know how to prefer duty to pleasure.' This was the first real obligation I owed my books, since these had taught me to reflect and compare. After the virtuous principles I had so lately adopted, after all the rules of wisdom and honour I had proposed to myself, and felt so proud to follow, the shame of possessing so little stability, and contradicting so egregiously my own maxims, triumphed over the allurements of pleasure. Pride had, perhaps, as much share in my resolution as virtue; but if this pride is not virtue itself, its effects are so similar that we are pardonable in deceiving ourselves.

One advantage resulting from good actions is that they elevate the soul to a disposition of attempting still better; for, such is human weakness, that we must place among our good deeds an abstinence from those crimes that we

are tempted to commit. No sooner was my resolution confirmed than I became another man, or rather I became what I was before I had erred, and what the intoxication of the moment had concealed. Full of worthy sentiments and wise resolutions, I continued my journey, intending to expiate my fault, to regulate my future conduct by the laws of virtue, to dedicate myself without reserve to that best of mothers, to whom I vowed as much fidelity in future as I felt real attachment, and to know no other love but the love of duty. The sincerity of this return to virtue appeared to promise a better destiny; but mine, alas! was fixed, and already begun; and while my heart, full of good and virtuous sentiments, was contemplating only innocence and happiness through life, I touched on the fatal period that was to draw after it the long chain of my misfortunes!

My impatience to end my journey had made me use more diligence than I intended. I had sent a letter from Valence, mentioning the day and hour I should arrive, but I had gained half a day on this calculation, which time I passed at Chaparillan, that I might arrive exactly at the time I mentioned. I wished to enjoy to its full extent the pleasure of seeing her, and preferred deferring this happiness a little, that expectancy might increase its value. This precaution had always succeeded; heretofore my arrival had caused a little holiday; I expected no less this time; and these preparations, so dear to me, would have been well worth the trouble of contriving them.

I came then exactly at the hour, and while at a considerable distance, looked forward with an expectancy of seeing her on the road to meet me. The beating of my heart increased as I drew near the house. At length I arrived, quite out of breath, for I had left my chaise in the town. I see no one in the garden, at the door, or at the windows; I am seized with terror, fearful that some accident has happened. I enter, all is quiet; the labourers are eating their luncheon in the kitchen, and far from observing any preparation, the servant seems surprised to see me, not knowing I was expected. I go upstairs. At length I see her—that dear Mamma, so tenderly, truly, and entirely beloved. I run towards her, and throw myself at her feet. 'Ah, child!' said she, 'art thou returned then?' embracing me at the same time; 'have you had a good journey? How do you do?' This reception disconcerted me for some moments. I then asked whether she had received my letter. She answered, 'Yes.' 'I should have thought not,' replied I; and the matter concluded there. A young man was with her at this time. I recollected having seen him in the house before my departure, but at present he seemed established there; in short, he was so; I found my place already supplied!

This young man came from the country of Vaud; his father, named Vintzenried, was Keeper —or, as he expressed himself, Captain—of the Castle of Chillon. This son of this Captain was a journeyman peruke-maker, and gained his living in that capacity when he first presented

himself to Madame de Warens, who received him kindly, as she did all comers, particularly those from her own country. He was a tall, fair, silly-looking youth; well enough made, with an unmeaning face, and a mind of the same description, speaking always like the beau in a comedy, and mingling the manners and customs of his former situation with a long history of his successes with ladies; naming, according to his account, not above half the Marchionesses who had favoured him, and pretending never to have dressed the head of a pretty woman without having likewise decorated her husband's; vain, foolish, ignorant, and insolent; such was the substitute taken in my absence, and the companion offered me on my return.

Oh! if souls disengaged from their terrestrial bonds yet view from the bosom of eternal light what passes here below, pardon, dear and honoured shade, that I show no more favour to your failings than my own, but equally unveil both to my readers' eyes. I ought, and will, be as just to you as to myself; how much less will you lose by this resolution than I shall! How much do your amiable and gentle disposition, your inexhaustible goodness of heart, your frankness, and other admirable virtues compensate for your weakness, if errors of reason alone can be called such! You had errors, but not vices; your conduct was reprehensible, but your heart was ever pure.

The new-comer had shown himself zealous and exact in all her little commissions, which

were very numerous, and he diligently overlooked the labourers. As noisy and insolent as I was quiet and forbearing, he was seen, or rather heard, at the plough, in the hay-loft, wood-house, stable, farm-yard, at the same instant. He neglected the gardening, this labour being too peaceful and moderate; his chief pleasure was to load or drive the cart, to saw or cleave wood; he was never seen without a hatchet or pick-axe in his hand, running, knocking, and hallooing with all his might. I know not how many men's labour he performed, but he certainly made noise enough for ten or a dozen at least. All this bustle impressed poor Mamma; she thought this young man a treasure, and, willing to attach him to herself, employed the means she imagined necessary for that purpose, not forgetting what she most depended on, the surrender of her person.

My readers should be able to form some judgment of my heart; its sentiments were the most constant and sincere, particularly those which had brought me back to Chambéri. What a sudden and complete overthrow was this to my whole being! To judge fully of this, the reader must place himself in my situation. I saw all the future felicity I had promised myself vanish in a moment; all the charming ideas I had indulged so affectionately disappear entirely; and I, who even from childhood had not been able to consider my existence for a moment as separate from hers, for the first time saw myself utterly alone. This moment was dreadful, and those that succeeded it were always

gloomy. I was yet young, but the pleasing sentiments of enjoyment and hope which enliven youth were extinguished. From that hour my existence seemed half annihilated. I contemplated in advance the melancholy remains of an insipid life, and if at any time an image of happiness glanced through my mind, it was not that which appeared natural to me, and I felt that, even should I obtain it, I could never be truly happy.

I was so dull of apprehension, and my confidence in her was so great, that, notwithstanding the familiar tone of the new-comer, which I looked on as an effect of Mamma's easy disposition, which rendered her free with every one, I never should have suspected his real situation had not she herself informed me of it; but she hastened to make this avowal with a freedom calculated to inflame me with resentment, could my heart have turned to that point. Speaking of this connection as quite immaterial with respect to herself, she reproached me with negligence in household affairs, and mentioned my frequent absence, as though she had been of such a temperament that she was obliged soon to supply my place. 'Ah, Mamma!' said I, my heart bursting with the most poignant grief, 'what do you dare to tell me? Is this the reward of an attachment like mine? Have you so many times preserved my life, for the sole purpose of taking from me all that could render it desirable? Your infidelity will bring me to the grave, but you will regret my loss!' She answered, with a tranquillity sufficient to

distract me, that I talked like a child; that people did not die from such light causes; that I had lost nothing; that our friendship need be no less sincere, nor we any less intimate in every sense, for that her tender attachment to me could neither diminish nor end but with herself. In a word, she gave me to understand that my former rights held good, and that in sharing them with another I suffered no deprivation.

Never did the purity, truth, and force of my attachment to her appear more evident: never did I feel the sincerity and honesty of my soul more forcibly than at that moment. 'No, Mamma,' replied I, with the most violent agitation, 'I love you too much to disgrace you thus far, and too truly to share you; the regret that accompanied the first acquisition of your favours has continued to increase with my affection; I cannot preserve them on such terms. You shall ever have my adoration; be worthy of it; I had rather honour you than be your lover. It is to you, O my dearest friend! that I resign my rights; it is to the union of our hearts that I sacrifice my pleasure; rather would I perish a thousand times than taste enjoyment which might degrade her I love.'

I preserved this resolution with a constancy worthy, I may say, of the sentiment that gave it birth. From this moment I saw this beloved Mamma but with the eyes of a real son. It should be remarked here that this resolve did not meet her private approbation, as I too well perceived; yet she never employed the least art to make me renounce it, either by insinuating

proposals, caresses, or any of those means which women so well know how to employ without exposing themselves to censure, and which seldom fail to succeed. Reduced to seek a fate independent of hers, and not able to devise one, I passed to the other extreme, placing my happiness so absolutely in her that I became almost regardless of myself. The ardent desire to see her happy, at any cost, absorbed all my affections; it was in vain she endeavoured to separate her felicity from mine; I felt I had a part in it, in spite of every impediment.

Thus, those virtues, whose seeds in my heart began to spring up with my misfortunes, which had been cultivated by study, only waited the fermentation of adversity to become prolific. The first fruit of this disinterested disposition was to put from my heart every sentiment of hatred and envy against him who had supplanted me. I even sincerely wished to attach myself to this young man; to form and educate him; to make him sensible of his happiness, and, if possible, render him worthy of it: in a word, to do for him what Anet had formerly done for me. But the similarity of dispositions was wanting. More insinuating and enlightened than Anet, I possessed neither his coolness, fortitude, nor commanding strength of character, which I must have had in order to succeed. Neither did the young man possess those qualities which Anet found in me; such as docility, gratitude, and above all, the knowledge of a want of his instructions, and an ardent desire to render them useful. All these were wanting;

the person I wished to improve saw in me nothing but an importunate, chattering pedant; while, on the contrary, he admired his own importance in the house, measuring the services he thought he rendered by the noise he made, and looking on his hatchets and pick-axes as infinitely more useful than all my old books; and perhaps in this particular he might not be altogether blamable, but he gave himself a number of airs sufficient to make any one die with laughter. With the peasants he assumed the airs of a country gentleman; presently he did as much with me, and at length with Mamma herself. His name, Vintzenried, did not appear noble enough; he therefore changed it to that of Monsieur de Courtilles, and by the latter appellation he was thenceforth known at Chambéri, and in Maurienne, where he married.

At length this illustrious person gave himself such airs of consequence that he was everything in the house, and myself nothing. When I had the misfortune to displease him, he scolded Mamma, and a fear of exposing her to his brutality rendered me subservient to all his whims, so that every time he cleaved wood—an office which he performed with singular pride—it was necessary I should be an idle spectator and admirer of his prowess. This lad was not, however, of a bad disposition. He loved Mamma because, indeed, it was impossible to do otherwise; nor had he any aversion even to me, and when he happened to be out of his airs would listen to our admonitions, and frankly own he was a fool; yet, notwithstanding these

acknowledgments, his follies were as numerous as before. His knowledge was so contracted, and his inclinations so mean, that it was useless to reason, and almost impossible to be pleased with him. Not content with a most charming woman, he fancied an old red-haired, toothless waiting-maid, whose unwelcome service Mamma had the patience to endure, though it was absolutely disgusting. I soon perceived this new intrigue, and was exasperated at it; but I saw something else, which affected me yet more, and made a deeper impression on me than anything had hitherto done. This was a visible coldness in Mamma's behaviour towards me.

The privation I had imposed on myself, and which she affected to approve, is one of those affronts which women scarcely ever forgive. Take the most sensible, the most philosophic female, one the least attached to pleasures of the senses, and slighting her favours, if within your reach, will be found the most unpardonable crime, even though she may care nothing for the man. This rule is certainly without exception, since a sympathy so natural and ardent was impaired in her by an abstinence founded only on virtue, attachment, and esteem. I no longer found with her that union of hearts which constituted all the happiness of mine. She seldom spoke to me with frankness but when she had occasion to complain of this newcomer, for, when they were agreed, I enjoyed but little of her confidence, and at length was scarcely ever consulted in her affairs. She

seemed pleased, indeed, with my company, but had I passed whole days without seeing her she would hardly have missed me.

Insensibly, I found myself desolate and alone in that house where I had formerly been the very soul—where, if I may so express myself, I had enjoyed a double life—and, by degrees, I accustomed myself to disregard everything that passed, and even those who dwelt there. To avoid continual mortifications, I shut myself up with my books, or else wept and sighed unnoticed in the woods. This life soon became insupportable. I felt that the presence of a woman so dear to me, while estranged from her heart, increased my unhappiness, and was persuaded that, ceasing to see her, I should feel myself less cruelly separated. I resolved, therefore, to quit the house, mentioned it to her, and she, far from opposing my resolution, approved it. She had an acquaintance at Grenoble called Madame Deybens, whose husband was on terms of friendship with Monsieur de Mably, chief provost of Lyons. Monsieur Deybens proposed my educating Monsieur de Mably's children. I accepted this offer, and departed for Lyons, without causing, and almost without feeling, the least regret at a separation the bare idea of which, a few months before, would have given us both the most excruciating torments.

I had almost as much knowledge as was necessary for a tutor, and flattered myself that my method would be unexceptionable; but the year I passed at Monsieur de Mably's was sufficient to undeceive me in that particular. The

natural gentleness of my disposition seemed calculated for the employment, if a hasty temper had not been mingled with it. While things went favourably, and I saw the pains, which I did not spare, succeed, I was an angel; but a devil when they went contrary. If my pupils did not understand me, I was thrown off my balance, and when they showed any symptoms of an untoward disposition, I was so provoked that I could have killed them: which behaviour was not likely to render them either good or wise. I had two under my care, and they were of very different tempers. Ste.-Marie, who was between eight and nine years old, had a good person and quick apprehension, was giddy, lively, playful, and mischievous; but his mischief was ever good-humoured. The younger one, named Condillac, appeared stupid and fidgety, was headstrong as a mule, and seemed incapable of instruction. It may be supposed that between both I did not want employment, yet with patience and temper I might have succeeded; but wanting both, I did nothing worth mentioning, and my pupils profited very little. Assiduity was not lacking, but I needed evenness of temper, and above all prudence. I could only make use of three means, which are very weak, and often pernicious with children—namely, sentiment, reasoning, passion. I sometimes spoke so earnestly and tenderly to Ste.-Marie that I could not refrain from tears, and wished to excite similar sensations in him, as if it were reasonable to suppose a child could be susceptible of such emotions. Sometimes I

exhausted myself in reasoning, as if persuaded he could comprehend me; and as he frequently hit upon very subtle arguments, concluded he must be reasonable, because he bade fair to be so good a logician. The little Condillac was still more embarrassing, for he neither understood, nor answered, nor was concerned at anything; he was of an obstinacy beyond belief, and was never happier than when he had succeeded in putting me in a rage; then, indeed, he was the philosopher, and I the child. I was conscious of all my faults, studied the tempers of my pupils, and do not think they ever succeeded in duping me; but where was the use of seeing the evil without being able to apply a remedy? My penetration was unavailing, since it never prevented any mischief, and everything I undertook failed, because all I did to effect my designs was precisely what I ought not to have done.

I was not more fortunate in what only had reference to myself than in what concerned my pupils. Madame Deybens, in recommending me to her friend Madame de Mably, had requested her to form my manners, and endeavour to give me an air of the world. She took some pains on this account, wishing to teach me how to do the honours of the house; but I was so awkward, bashful, and stupid, that she found it necessary to stop there. This, however, did not prevent me from falling in love with her, according to my usual custom. I even behaved in such a manner that she could not avoid observing it; but I never durst declare my

passion, and, as the lady never seemed in a humour to make advances, I soon became weary of my sighs and ogling, being convinced they answered no manner of purpose.

I had quite lost my inclination for petty thefts while with Mamma; indeed, as everything belonged to me, there was nothing to steal; besides, the elevated notions I had imbibed ought to have rendered me in future above such meanness, and generally speaking they certainly did so; but this proceeded less from my having learned to conquer temptations, than having succeeded in rooting out the propensity, and I should even now greatly dread stealing, as in my infancy, were I yet subject to the same inclinations. I had a proof of this at Monsieur de Mably's, where, though surrounded by a number of little things that I could easily have pilfered, and which appeared no temptation, I took it into my head to covet some white Arbois wine, a few glasses of which I had drunk at table, and thought delicious. It happened to be rather thick, and, as I fancied myself an excellent finer of wine, I mentioned my skill, and this was accordingly trusted to my care; but in attempting to mend I spoiled it, though to the sight only, for it remained equally agreeable to the taste. Profiting by this opportunity, I furnished myself from time to time with a few bottles to drink in my own apartment; but, unluckily, I could never drink without eating—the difficulty lay, therefore, in procuring bread. It was impossible to make a reserve of this article, and to have it bought for me by

the footman was discovering myself, and insulting the master of the house. I dared not purchase it myself: how could a fine gentleman, with a sword by his side, enter a baker's shop to buy a small loaf of bread? It was utterly impossible. At length I recollected the saying of a great princess, who, on being informed that the countrypeople had no bread, replied, 'Then let them eat pastry.' Yet even this resource was attended with a difficulty. I sometimes went out alone for this very purpose, running over the whole city, and passing thirty pastrycooks' shops without daring to enter any one of them. In the first place, it was necessary there should be only one person in the shop, and that person's physiognomy must be so encouraging as to give me confidence to pass the threshold; but when once the dear little cake was procured, and I was shut up in my chamber with that and a bottle of wine, taken cautiously from the bottom of a cupboard, how much did I enjoy my little draughts, while reading a few pages of a novel—for when I have no company I always like to read while eating; it seems a substitute for society, and I despatch alternately a page and a morsel; 'tis, indeed, as if my book dined with me.

I was neither dissolute nor sottish, never in my whole life having been intoxicated with liquor. My little thefts were not very indiscreet, yet they were discovered—the bottles betrayed me, and, though no notice was taken of it, I had no longer the management of the cellar. In all this Monsieur de Mably con-

ducted himself with prudence and politeness, being really a very deserving man, who, under a manner as harsh as his employment, concealed a real gentleness of disposition and uncommon goodness of heart. He was judicious, equitable, and—what would not be expected from an officer of the Maréchaussée—very humane. Sensible of his indulgence, I became greatly attached to him, which made my stay in his house longer than it would otherwise have been; but at length, disgusted with an employment which I was not calculated for, and a situation of great confinement, consequently disagreeable to me, after a year's trial, during which time I spared no pains to fulfil my engagement, I determined to quit my pupils, being convinced that I should never succeed in educating them properly. Monsieur de Mably saw this as clearly as myself, though I am inclined to think he would never have dismissed me had I not spared him the trouble, which was an excess of condescension in this particular that I certainly cannot justify.

What rendered my situation yet more insupportable was the comparison I was continually drawing between the life I now led and that which I had quitted: the remembrance of my dear Charmettes, my garden, trees, fountain, and orchard, but, above all, the company of her for whom I was born, and who was truly the soul of these enjoyments. On calling to mind our pleasures and innocent life, I was seized with such oppressions and heaviness of heart as deprived me of the power of action.

A hundred times I was tempted instantly to set off on foot to her, being persuaded that, could I once more see her, I should be content to die that moment. In fine, I could no longer resist the tender emotions which recalled me back to her, whatever it might cost me. I accused myself of not having been sufficiently patient, complaisant, and kind; concluding I might yet live happily with her on the terms of tender friendship, and by showing more for her than I had hitherto done. I formed the finest projects in the world, burned to execute them, left all, renounced everything, departed, fled, and arriving in all the transports of my early youth, found myself once more at her feet. Alas! I should have died there with joy had I found in her reception, in her embrace, or in her heart, one quarter of what I had formerly found there, and of which I yet felt the undiminished warmth.

Fearful illusion of transitory things! She received me with that excellence of heart which could only die with her; but I sought a past which could never be recalled, and had hardly been half an hour with her before I was once more convinced that my former happiness had vanished for ever, and that I was in the same melancholy situation which I had been obliged to fly from, yet without being able to accuse any person of my unhappiness, for Courtilles really was not to blame, appearing to see my return with more pleasure than dissatisfaction. But how could I bear to be a secondary person with her to whom I had been everything, and

who could never cease being such to me? How could I live an alien in that house where I had been the child? The sight of every object that had been witness to my former happiness rendered the comparison yet more distressing. I should have suffered less in any other habitation, for this incessantly recalled pleasing remembrances that embittered the consciousness of my loss. Consumed with vain regrets, given up to the most gloomy melancholy, I resumed the custom of remaining alone, except at meals. Shut up with my books, I sought to give some useful diversion to my ideas, and feeling the imminent danger of want, which I had so long dreaded, I sought means to provide against it when Mamma should have no other resource. I had placed her household on such a footing that affairs could proceed without growing worse, but since my departure everything had become altered. He who now managed her affairs was a spendthrift, and wished to make a great appearance, such as keeping a good horse with elegant trappings, loving to appear gay in the eyes of the neighbours, and was perpetually undertaking something he did not understand. Her pension was taken up in advance, her rent was in arrears, debts of every kind continued to accumulate. I could plainly foresee that her pension would soon be seized, and perhaps suppressed. In short, I expected nothing but ruin and misfortune, and the moment appeared to approach so rapidly that I already felt all its horrors.

My little library was my only amusement,

and the habit of searching for remedies for the sufferings of my mind determined me to seek some against the evil of those distressing circumstances which I daily expected would fall upon us; so, returning to my old chimeras, behold me once more building castles in the air to relieve this dear friend from the cruel extremities into which I saw her ready to fall. I did not believe myself qualified to shine in the republic of letters, or to stand any chance of making a fortune by that means; a new idea, therefore, inspired me with that confidence which the mediocrity of my talents could not impart. In ceasing to teach music I had not abandoned it. On the contrary, I had studied the theory sufficiently to consider myself well informed on the subject. When reflecting on the trouble it had cost me to read music, and the great difficulty I yet experienced in singing at sight, I began to think the fault might as well arise from the manner of noting as from my own dulness, being sensible it was an art which most people find difficult to understand. By examining the formation of the signs, I was convinced they were frequently very ill devised. I had before thought of marking the gamut by figures, to prevent the trouble of having to draw lines, or of noting the plainest air, but had been stopped by the difficulty of the octaves, and by the distinction of measure and quantity. This idea returned again to my mind, and, on a careful revision of it, I found the difficulties were by no means insurmountable. I pursued it successfully, and was at length able to note

any music whatever by figures, with the greatest exactitude and simplicity. From this moment I supposed my fortune made, and, in the ardour of sharing it with her to whom I owed everything, thought only of going to Paris, not doubting that, on presenting my project to the Academy, it would produce a revolution. I had brought some money from Lyons. I augmented this stock by the sale of my books, and in the course of a fortnight my resolution was both formed and executed. In short, full of the magnificent ideas it had inspired, and which were common to me on every occasion, I departed from Savoy with my new system of music, as I had formerly done from Turin with my heron-fountain.[1]

Such have been the errors and failings of my youth. I have related the history of them with a fidelity which my heart approves; if my riper years were dignified with some virtues, I should have related them with the same frankness; it was my intention to have done this, but I must stop here. Time may withdraw the veil; and, should my memory reach posterity, it may one day discover what I had to say. The reason of my silence will then be known.

[1] See vol. i. p. 147.

PART II—BOOK VII

[1741]

After two years' silence and patience, and notwithstanding my resolutions, I again take up my pen. Reader, suspend your judgment as to the reasons which force me to such a step: of these you cannot judge until you shall have read my book.

My peaceful youth has been seen to pass away calmly and agreeably, without any great disappointments or remarkable prosperity. This mediocrity was mostly owing to my ardent yet feeble nature, less prompt in undertaking than easy to discourage: quitting repose by starts, but returning to it from lassitude and inclination, and which, placing me in an idle and tranquil state, for which alone I felt I was born, at a distance from the paths of great virtues, and still farther from those of great vices, never permitted me to arrive at anything great, either good or bad.

What a different picture shall I soon have to display! Fate, which for thirty years favoured my inclinations, for thirty more has opposed them; and this continued opposition between my situation and disposition will appear to have

been the source of enormous faults, unheard-of misfortunes, and of every virtue except that fortitude which alone can do honour to adversity.

The first part of this work was written from memory, and therefore I must have fallen into many errors. As I am obliged to write the second part from memory also, the errors in it will probably be still more numerous. The agreeable remembrance of my fairest years. passed with so much tranquillity and innocence, has left in my heart a thousand charming impressions, which I love incessantly to call to my recollection. It will soon appear how different from these those of the rest of my life have been. To recall them to my mind is to renew their bitterness. Far from increasing that of my situation by these sorrowful reflections, I repel them as much as possible, and in this endeavour often succeed so well as to be unable to retrace them at will. This facility of forgetting my misfortunes is a consolation which Heaven has reserved to me in the midst of those which fate was one day to accumulate upon my head. My memory, which presents to me no objects but such as are agreeable, is the happy counterpoise of my terrified imagination, by which I foresee nothing but a cruel futurity.

All the papers I had collected to aid my recollection, and guide me in this undertaking, having passed into other hands, can never more be in mine.

I have but one faithful guide on which I can depend: this is the chain of sentiments by which the succession of my existence has been

marked, and by these the events which have been either efficient causes or effects. I easily forget my misfortunes, but I cannot forget my faults, and still less my virtuous sentiments. The remembrance of these is too dear to me ever to be effaced from my mind. I may omit facts, transpose events, and fall into some errors of dates; but I cannot be deceived in what I have felt, nor in that which from sentiment I have done; and to relate this is my chief aim. The real object of my confessions is to communicate an exact knowledge of what I essentially am and have been in every situation of my life. I have promised the history of my mind, and to write it faithfully I have no need of other aids: to enter into my own heart, as I have hitherto done, will alone be sufficient.

There is, however, and very happily, an interval of six or seven years, relative to which I have exact references, in a collection of letters copied from the originals, which are in the hands of Monsieur du Peyrou. This collection, which concludes in 1760, comprehends the whole time of my residence at the Hermitage, and my great quarrel with those who called themselves my friends—that memorable epoch of my life, and the source of all my other misfortunes. With respect to more recent original letters which may remain in my possession, and are but few in number, instead of transcribing them at the end of the collection, too voluminous to enable me to deceive the vigilance of my Arguses, I will copy them into the work itself whenever they appear to furnish

any explanation, be this either for or against myself; for I am not under the least apprehension lest the reader should forget I make my confession, and believe that I make my apology; but he must not expect that I shall conceal the truth when it testifies in my favour.

This second part, it is to be remembered, contains nothing in common with the first except truth, nor has any other advantage over it but the importance of the facts; with that exception, it must be in every way inferior. I wrote the first with pleasure, with satisfaction, and at my ease, at Wootton, or in the Château de Trye. Everything I had to recollect was a new enjoyment. I returned to their contemplation with fresh pleasure, and without constraint gave those touches to my descriptions which most flattered my imagination. At present my brain and memory are so weak as to render me almost incapable of every kind of application: my present undertaking is the result of constraint, and a heart full of sorrow. I have nothing to treat of but misfortunes, treacheries, perfidies, and circumstances equally afflicting. I would give the world, could I bury in the obscurity of time everything I have to say, and which, in spite of myself, I am obliged to relate. I am, at the same time, under the necessity of being mysterious and subtle, of endeavouring to mislead, and of descending to things the most foreign to my nature. The ceiling under which I write has eyes; the walls of my chamber have ears. Surrounded by spies and by vigilant and malevolent watchers, disturbed and my

attention diverted, I hastily commit to paper a few broken sentences, which I have scarcely time to read, and still less to correct. I know that, notwithstanding the vast barriers which are piled up around me, my enemies are afraid lest truth should escape by some little opening. What means can I take to launch it to the world? This I attempt with but few hopes of success. The reader will judge whether or not such a situation furnishes the means of agreeable descriptions, or of giving them a seductive colouring! I therefore forewarn such as may undertake to read this work that nothing can secure them from weariness in the prosecution of their task, unless it be the desire of becoming more fully acquainted with a man, and a sincere love of justice and truth.

In my first part I brought down my narrative to my departure, with regret, for Paris, leaving my heart at Les Charmettes, and there building my last castle in the air, intending some day to return to the feet of Mamma, restored to herself, with the treasures I should have acquired, and depending upon my system of music as upon a certain fortune.

I made some stay at Lyons to visit my acquaintance, procure letters of recommendation to Paris, and to sell my books of geometry which I had brought with me. I was well received by all whom I knew. Monsieur and Madame de Mably seemed pleased to see me again, and several times invited me to dinner. At their house I became acquainted with the Abbé de Mably, as I had already been with the Abbé de

Condillac, both of whom were on a visit to their brother. The Abbé de Mably gave me letters to Paris; among others, one to Monsieur de Fontenelle, and another to the Comte de Caylus. These were very agreeable acquaintances, especially the first, to whose friendship for me his death only put an end, and from whom, in our private conversations, I received advice which I ought to have more exactly followed.

I likewise saw Monsieur Bordes, with whom I had been long acquainted, and who had frequently obliged me with the greatest cordiality and the most real pleasure; he was no less friendly now. He it was who enabled me to sell my books; and he also gave me from himself and others good recommendations to Paris. I again saw the Intendant, for whose acquaintance I was indebted to Monsieur Bordes, and who procured my introduction to the Duc de Richelieu, who was then passing through Lyons. Monsieur Pallu presented me. Monsieur de Richelieu received me well, and invited me to come and see him at Paris. I did so several times, although this great acquaintance, of which I shall frequently have occasion to speak, was never of any utility to me.

I visited the musician David, who, in one of my former journeys, and in my distress, had rendered me service. He had either lent or given me a cap and a pair of stockings, which I have never returned, nor has he ever asked me for them, although we have since that time frequently seen each other. I however made him a present, something like an equivalent.

I would say more upon this subject, were what I have owed in question; but I have to speak of what I have done, which unfortunately is far from being the same thing.

I also saw the noble and generous Perrichon, and not without feeling the effects of his accustomed munificence; for he made me the same present he had previously made to the elegant Bernard, by paying for my place in the diligence. I visited the surgeon Parisot, the best and most beneficent of men; as also his beloved Godefroi, who had lived with him ten years, and whose merit chiefly consisted in her gentle manners and goodness of heart. It was impossible to see this woman without interest, or to leave her without regret, for she was in the last stage of consumption, of which disease she shortly afterwards died. Nothing better shows the inclinations of a man than the nature of his attachments.[1] Those who had once seen the gentle Godefroi immediately knew the good and amiable Parisot.

I was much obliged to all these good people, but I afterwards neglected them all; not from ingratitude, but from that invincible indolence

[1] Unless he be deceived in his original choice, or she to whom he attaches himself changes her character by an extraordinary concurrence of causes, which is not absolutely impossible. Were this consequence to be admitted without modification, Socrates must be judged by his wife Xantippe, and Dion by his friend Calippus, which would be the most false and iniquitous judgment ever made. However, let no injurious application be here made to my wife. She is, indeed, weaker and more easily deceived than I at first imagined, but by her pure and excellent character, quite exempt from malice, she is worthy of all my esteem, and shall have it while I live.—R.

which so often resembles it in my case. The remembrance of their services has never been effaced from my heart; but I could more easily have proved my gratitude than assiduously have made it manifest. Exactitude in correspondence is what I never could observe; the moment I begin to relax, the shame and embarrassment of repairing my fault make me aggravate it, and I entirely desist from writing; I have therefore been silent, and appeared to forget them. Parisot and Perrichon took not the least notice of my negligence, and I ever found them the same; but, twenty years afterwards, it will be seen, in Monsieur Bordes, to what a degree the self-love of a wit can make him carry his vengeance when he feels himself neglected.

Before I leave Lyons, I must not forget an amiable person whom I again saw with more pleasure than ever, and who left in my heart the most tender remembrance. This was Mademoiselle Serre, of whom I have spoken in my first part; I renewed my acquaintance with her whilst I was at Monsieur de Mably's. Being now more at leisure, I saw her more frequently, and she made the most sensible impressions on my heart. I had some reason to believe her own was not unfavourable to my pretensions; but she honoured me with her confidence so far as to remove from me all temptation to abuse it. She had no fortune, and in this respect exactly resembled myself; our situations were too similar to permit us to become united; and with the views I then had, I was far from thinking of marriage. She gave

me to understand that a young merchant, one Monsieur Genève, seemed to wish to obtain her hand. I saw him once or twice at her lodgings; he appeared to me to be an honest man, and this was his general character. Persuaded she would be happy with him, I was desirous he should marry her, which he afterwards did; and, that I might not disturb their innocent love, I hastened my departure, offering up for the happiness of that charming woman prayers which, here below, alas! were effectual only for a brief period; for I afterwards heard she died in the second or third year after her marriage. My mind, during the journey, was wholly absorbed in tender regret. I felt—and since that time, when these circumstances have been present to my recollection, have frequently felt the same—that although the sacrifices made to virtue and our duty may sometimes be painful, we are well rewarded by the agreeable remembrance they leave engraven in our hearts.

I this time saw Paris in as favourable a point of view as it had appeared to me in an unfavourable one on my first journey: not that my ideas of its brilliancy arose from the splendour of my lodgings; for, in consequence of an address given me by Monsieur Bordes, I resided at the Hôtel Saint-Quentin, Rue des Cordiers, near the Sorbonne—a vile street, a miserable hotel, and a wretched apartment, but nevertheless a house in which several men of merit, such as Gresset, Bordes, the Abbé de Mably, the Abbé de Condillac, and several others, of whom unfortunately I found not one, had taken up their

quarters; but I there met with Monsieur de Bonnefond, a man unacquainted with the world, lame, litigious, and who affected to be a purist. To him I owe the acquaintance of Monsieur Roguin, at present the oldest friend I have, and by whose means I became acquainted with the philosopher Diderot, of whom I shall subsequently have occasion to say a good deal.

I arrived at Paris in the autumn of 1741, with fifteen louis in my purse, my comedy of *Narcisse* and my musical project. These composed my whole resources; consequently, I had not much time to lose before I attempted to turn the latter to some advantage. I therefore hastened to make use of my recommendations. A young man who arrives at Paris with a tolerable figure, and announces himself by his talents, is sure to be well received. This was my good fortune, which procured me some pleasures without leading to anything solid. Of all the persons to whom I was recommended, three only were useful to me—Monsieur Damesin, a gentleman of Savoy, at that time equerry, and I believe favourite, of the Princesse de Carignan; Monsieur de Boze, secretary to the Academy of Inscriptions, and keeper of the medals of the King's Cabinet; and Père Castel, a Jesuit, author of the 'clavecin oculaire.' All these recommendations, except that to Monsieur Damesin, were given me by the Abbé de Mably.

Monsieur Damesin provided me with that which was most needful, by means of two persons with whom he brought me acquainted. One was Monsieur de Gasc, Président à mortier

of the Parliament of Bordeaux, and who played very well upon the violin; the other, the Abbé de Léon, who then lodged in the Sorbonne, a young nobleman, extremely amiable, who died in the flower of his age, after having for a moment, so to speak, made a figure in the world under the name of the Chevalier de Rohan. Both these gentlemen had an inclination to learn composition. In this I gave them lessons for a few months, by which means my decreasing purse received some little aid. The Abbé de Léon conceived a friendship for me, and wished me to become his secretary; but he was far from being rich, and all the salary he could offer me was eight hundred francs, which, with great regret, I refused, since it was insufficient to defray the expenses of my lodging, food, and clothing.

I was well received by Monsieur de Boze. He had a thirst for knowledge, of which he possessed not a little, but was somewhat pedantic. Madame de Boze might have been taken for his daughter; she was lively, and had the airs of a *petite maîtresse*. I sometimes dined with them, and it is impossible to be more awkward than I was in her presence. Her easy manner intimidated me, and rendered mine more ridiculous. When she presented me with a plate, I modestly put forward my fork to take one of the least bits of what she offered me, which made her give the plate to her servant, turning her head aside that I might not see her laugh. She had not the least suspicion that in the head of the country fellow there was some small portion of wit. Monsieur de Boze presented

me to Monsieur de Réaumur, his friend, who came to dine with him every Friday, the day on which the Academy of Sciences met. He mentioned to him my project, and the desire I had of having it examined by the Academy. Monsieur de Réaumur consented to make the proposal, and his offer was accepted. On the day appointed I was introduced and presented by him, and on the same day, August 22nd, 1742, I had the honour to read to the Academy the memoir I had prepared for that purpose. Although this illustrious assembly was assuredly very imposing, I was less intimidated on this occasion than I had been in the presence of Madame de Boze; and I got tolerably well through my reading and the answers I was obliged to give. The memoir was well received, and acquired me some compliments, by which I was equally surprised and flattered, hardly imagining that, before an Academy, whoever was not a member of it could have common sense. The persons appointed to examine my system were Messieurs de Mairan, Hellot, and de Fouchy, all three men of merit, indeed, but not one of whom understood music, at least not enough to enable them to judge of my project.

[1742.] During my conferences with these gentlemen, I was convinced, with no less certainty than surprise, that, if men of learning have sometimes fewer prejudices than others, they more tenaciously retain those they have. However weak or false most of their objections were, and although I answered them with great

timidity, and, I confess, in bad terms, yet with decisive reasons, I never once made myself understood, or seemed to satisfy them. I was constantly surprised at the facility with which, by the aid of a few sonorous phrases, they refuted, without having comprehended me. They had raked up, I know not whence, the knowledge that a monk called Père Souhaitti had formerly invented a mode of noting the gamut by ciphers—a sufficient proof for them that my system was not new. This might, perhaps, be the case; for, although I had never heard of Père Souhaitti, and notwithstanding his manner of writing the seven plain-song notes without attending to the octaves was not, under any point of view, worthy of entering into competition with my simple and commodious invention for easily noting by ciphers every possible kind of music, keys, rests, octaves, measure, time and length of notes—things on which Souhaitti had never thought—it was nevertheless true that, with respect to the elementary expression of the seven notes, he was the first inventor. But besides their giving to this primitive invention more importance than was due to it, they went still further, and whenever they spoke of the fundamental principles of the system talked nonsense. The greatest advantage of my scheme was to supersede transpositions and keys, so that the same piece of music was noted and transposed at will by means of the change of a single initial letter at the head of the air. These gentlemen had heard from the conventional music-masters of

Paris that the method of executing by transposition was a bad one; and on this authority converted the most evident advantage of my system into an invincible objection against it, and affirmed that my mode of notation was good for vocal music, but bad for instrumental, instead of concluding, as they ought to have done, that it was good for vocal, and still better for instrumental. On their report the Academy granted me a certificate full of fine compliments, amidst which it appeared that in reality it judged my system to be neither new nor useful. I did not think proper to ornament with such a paper the work entitled *Dissertation sur la Musique Moderne*, by which I appealed to the public.

I had reason to remark on this occasion that, even with a narrow understanding, the sole but profound knowledge of a thing is preferable for the purpose of judging of it to all the lights resulting from a cultivation of the sciences, when to these a particular study of that in question has not been joined. The only solid objection to my system was made by Rameau. I had scarcely explained it to him before he discovered its weak part. 'Your signs,' said he, 'are very good, inasmuch as they clearly and simply determine the length of notes, exactly represent intervals, and show the simple in the double note, which the common notation does not do; but they are objectionable on account of their requiring an operation of the mind, which cannot always accompany the rapidity of execution. The position of our

notes,' continued he, 'is described to the eye without the concurrence of this operation. If two notes, one very high and the other very low, be joined by a series of intermediate ones, I see at the first glance the progress from one to the other by conjoined degrees; but in your system, to perceive this series, I must necessarily run over your ciphers one after the other; the glance of the eye is here useless.' The objection appeared to me insurmountable, and I instantly assented to it. Although it be simple and striking, nothing can suggest it to the intellect but great knowledge and practice of the art, and it is by no means astonishing that not one of the academicians should have thought of it. But what creates much surprise is, that these men of great learning, and who possess so much knowledge, should so little know that each ought to confine his judgment to that with which he is really conversant.

My frequent visits to the literati appointed to examine my system, and the other academicians, gave me an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the most distinguished men of letters in Paris, and by this means the acquaintance that would have been the consequence of my sudden admission amongst them, which afterwards came to pass, was already established. With respect to the present moment, absorbed in my system of music, I obstinately adhered to my intention of effecting a revolution in the art, and by that means of acquiring a celebrity which, in the fine arts, is in Paris mostly accompanied by fortune. I shut myself in my

chamber and laboured three or four months with inexpressible ardour, in recasting into a work for the public eye the memoir I had read before the Academy. The difficulty was to find a bookseller to take my manuscript; and this on account of the necessary expenses for new types, and because booksellers give not their money by handfuls to young authors; although to me it seemed but just that my work should render me the bread I had eaten while employed in its composition.

Bonnefond introduced me to the elder Quillau, with whom I agreed to divide the profits, without reckoning the privilege, of which I paid the whole expense. Such were the future proceedings of this Quillau, that I lost the expenses of my privilege, never having received a liard from that edition, which probably had but very middling success, although the Abbé Desfontaines had promised to give it celebrity, and other journalists had spoken of it very favourably.

The greatest obstacle to making the experiment of my system was the fear, in case of its not being received, of losing the time necessary to learn it. To this I answered that my notes rendered the idea so clear that, if one desired to learn music by means of the ordinary characters, time would yet be gained in beginning with mine. To prove this by experience, I taught music gratis to a young American lady, Mademoiselle des Roulins, with whom Monsieur Roguin had brought me acquainted. In three months she read every kind of music by means

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of my notation, and sang at sight better than I did myself any piece that was not too difficult. This success was convincing, but not known; any other person would have filled the journals with the details, but, with some talents for discovering useful things, I never have possessed that of setting them off to advantage.

Thus was my heron-fountain again broken; but this time I was thirty years of age, and in the streets of Paris, where it is impossible to live on air. The resolution I took upon this occasion will astonish none but those by whom the first part of these memoirs has not been read with attention. I had just made efforts as great as they were fruitless, and was in need of relaxation. Instead of sinking with despair, I gave myself up quietly to my indolence and to the care of Providence; and, the better to allow time for its assistance, I laid down a plan for the slow expenditure of a few louis which still remained in my possession, regulating the expense of my simple pleasures without retrenching it, going to the café but every other day, and to the theatre but twice a week. With respect to the gratification of sensual inclinations, I had no retrenchment to make, never having in the whole course of my life applied so much as a sou to that use except once, an occasion of which I shall soon have to speak.

The security, voluptuousness, and confidence with which I gave myself up to this indolent and solitary life, which I had not the means of continuing for three months, is one of the singularities of my life and the oddities of my

disposition. The extreme desire I had that the public should think of me was precisely what discouraged me from showing myself; and the necessity of paying visits rendered them to such a degree insupportable that I ceased visiting the academicians and other men of letters with whom I had cultivated an acquaintance. Marivaux, the Abbe de Mably, and Fontenelle were almost the only persons whom I sometimes went to see. To the first I showed my comedy of *Narcisse*. He was pleased with it, and had the goodness to retouch it here and there. Diderot, younger than these, was much about my own age. He was fond of music, and knew it theoretically. We conversed together, and he communicated to me some of his literary projects. This soon formed betwixt us a more intimate connection, which lasted fifteen years, and which probably would still exist had not I, unfortunately, and by his own fault, thrown myself into the same profession.

It would be impossible to imagine in what manner I employed this short and precious interval which still remained to me, before circumstances should force me to beg my bread: in learning by memory passages from the poets which I had learned and forgotten a hundred times. Every morning, at ten o'clock, I went to walk in the Luxembourg with a Virgil and a Rousseau in my pocket, and there until the hour of dinner I passed away the time in restoring to my memory a sacred ode or a bucolic, without being discouraged through forgetting, by the study of the morning, what I

had learned the evening before. I recollected that after the defeat of Nicias at Syracuse, the captive Athenians obtained a livelihood by reciting the poems of Homer. The use I made of this erudition to ward off misery was to exercise my happy memory by learning all the poets by rote.

I had another expedient, not less solid, in the game of chess, to which I regularly dedicated, at Maugis' café, the evenings on which I did not go to the theatre. I thus became acquainted with Monsieur de Légal, a Monsieur Husson, Philidor, and all the great chess-players of the day, without becoming any more expert. However, I had no doubt but, in the end, I should become superior to them all, and this, in my own opinion, was a sufficient resource. The same manner of reasoning served me in every folly to which I felt myself inclined. I said to myself: Whoever excels in anything is sure to be well received in society. Let me, therefore, excel, no matter in what, I shall certainly be sought after; opportunities will present themselves, and my own merit will do the rest. This childishness was not the sophism of my reason; it was that of my indolence. Dismayed at the great and rapid efforts which would have been necessary to call forth my endeavours, I strove to flatter my idleness, and by arguments suitable to the purpose veiled from my own eyes the shame of such a state.

I thus calmly waited for the moment when I was to be without money; and had not Père Castel, whom I sometimes went to see in my

way to the café, roused me from my lethargy, I believe I should have seen myself reduced to my last sou without the least emotion. Père Castel was a madman, but a good man upon the whole; he was sorry to see me thus impoverish myself to no purpose. 'Since musicians and the learned,' said he, 'do not sing by your scale, change the string, and apply to the women. You will perhaps succeed better with them. I have spoken of you to Madame de Beuzenval; go to her from me; she is a good woman, who will be glad to see the countryman of her son and husband. You will find at her house Madame de Broglie, her daughter, who is a woman of wit. Madame Dupin is another to whom I have mentioned you; carry her your work; she is desirous of seeing you, and will receive you well. Nothing is done in Paris without the women. They are the curves, of which the wise are the asymptotes —they incessantly approach each other, but never touch.'

After having from day to day delayed these very disagreeable steps, I at length took courage and called upon Madame de Beuzenval. She received me with kindness, and Madame de Broglie entering the chamber, she said to her: 'Daughter, this is Monsieur Rousseau, of whom Père Castel has spoken to us.' Madame de Broglie complimented me upon my work, and, going to her harpsichord, proved to me she had already given it some attention. Perceiving it to be about one o'clock, I prepared to leave. Madame de Beuzenval said to me: 'You are

at a great distance from the quarter in which you reside; stay and dine here.' I did not want asking a second time. A quarter of an hour afterwards, I understood, by a word or two, that the dinner to which she had invited me was to that of her servants' hall. Madame de Beuzenval was a very good kind of woman, but of a limited understanding, and too full of her illustrious Polish nobility—she had no idea of the respect due to talents. On this occasion, likewise, she judged me by my manner rather than by my dress, which, although very plain, was very neat, and by no means announced a man to dine with servants. I had too long forgotten the way to the place where they eat to be inclined to take it again. Without suffering my anger to appear, I told Madame de Beuzenval that an affair of a trifling nature, which I had just recollected, obliged me to return home, and I immediately prepared to depart. Madame de Broglie approached her mother, and whispered in her ear a few words, which had their effect. Madame de Beuzenval rose to prevent me from going, and said, 'I expect that you will do us the honour to dine with us.' In this case, I thought to show pride would be a mark of folly, and I determined to stay. The goodness of Madame de Broglie had, besides, made an impression upon me, and rendered her interesting in my eyes. I was very glad to dine with her, and hoped that when she knew me better she would not regret having procured me that honour. Monsieur le Président de Lamoignon—very intimate in the

family—dined there also. He, as well as Madame de Broglie, was a master of all the modish and fashionable small-talk of Paris. Poor Jean-Jacques was unable to make a figure in this way. I had sense enough not to pretend to it, and was silent. Happy would it have been for me had I always possessed the same wisdom—I should not be in the abyss into which I am now fallen.

I was vexed at my own stupidity, and at being unable to justify to Madame de Broglie what she had done in my favour. After dinner, I thought of my ordinary resource. I had in my pocket an epistle in verse, written to Parisot during my residence at Lyons. This fragment was not without some fire, which I increased by my manner of reading, and made them all three shed tears. Whether it was vanity, or really the truth, I thought the eyes of Madame de Broglie seemed to say to her mother, 'Well, mamma, was I wrong in telling you this man was fitter to dine with us than with your women?' Until then my heart had been rather burdened, but after this revenge I felt myself satisfied. Madame de Broglie, carrying her favourable opinion of me rather too far, thought I should immediately acquire fame in Paris, and become a favourite with fine ladies. To guide my inexperience, she gave me *The Confessions of the Comte de* —— 'This book,' said she, 'is a mentor, of which you will stand in need in the great world. You will do well by sometimes consulting it.' I kept the book upwards of twenty years, with a sentiment of gratitude to her from whose hands I had received

it, although I frequently laughed at the opinion the lady seemed to have of my merit in gallantry. From the moment I had read the work, I was desirous of acquiring the friendship of the author. My inclination led me right; he is the only real friend I have ever possessed amongst men of letters.[1]

From this time I thought I might depend on the services of Madame la Baronne de Beuzenval, and Madame la Marquise de Broglie, and that they would not long leave me without resource. In this I was not deceived. But I must now speak of my first visit to Madame Dupin, which produced more lasting consequences.

Madame Dupin was, as all know, the daughter of Samuel Bernard and Madame Fontaine. There were three sisters, who might be called the Three Graces: Madame de La Touche, who had a little intrigue in England with the Duke of Kingston; Madame d'Arty, the mistress and, what is far more, the friend, the only sincere friend, of the Prince de Conti—an adorable woman, as well by the sweetness and goodness of her charming character as by her agreeable wit and incessant cheerfulness; lastly, Madame Dupin, more beautiful than either of her sisters, and the only one who has not been reproached with levity of conduct.

She was the reward of the hospitality of

[1] I was so long of the same opinion, and so perfectly convinced of its being well founded, that since my return to Paris I confided to him the manuscript of my *Confessions*. The suspicious Jean-Jacques never suspected perfidy and falsehood until he had been their victim.—R.

Monsieur Dupin, to whom her mother gave her in marriage, with the place of Farmer-general and an immense fortune, in return for the good reception he had given her in his province. When I saw her for the first time, she was still one of the finest women in Paris. She received me at her toilette; her arms were uncovered, her hair dishevelled, and her dressing-gown ill fastened. This scene was new to me; it was too powerful for my poor head, I became confused, my senses wandered; in short, I was violently smitten by Madame Dupin.

My confusion was not prejudicial to me: she did not perceive it. She kindly received the book, and the author; spoke intelligently of my plan, sang, accompanied herself on the harpsichord, kept me to dinner, and placed me at table by her side. Less than this would have turned my brain; I became infatuated. She permitted me to visit her, and I abused the permission. I went to see her almost every day, and dined with her twice or thrice a week. I burned with inclination to speak, but never dared attempt it. Several circumstances increased my natural timidity. Permission to visit in an opulent family was a door open to fortune, and in my situation I was unwilling to run the risk of shutting it against myself. Madame Dupin, amiable as she was, was serious and unanimated; I found nothing in her manners sufficiently alluring to embolden me. Her house, at that time as brilliant as any other in Paris, was frequented by societies the less numerous as the persons by whom they were

composed were chosen on account of some distinguished merit. She was fond of seeing every one who had claims to a marked superiority, the nobility, men of letters, and fine women. No person was seen in her circle but dukes, ambassadors, and those on whom orders had been conferred. Madame la Princesse de Rohan, Madame la Comtesse de Forcalquier, Madame de Mirepoix, Madame de Brignolé, and Lady Hervey passed for her intimate friends. Monsieur de Fontenelle, the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, the Abbé Sallier, Monsieur de Fourmont, Monsieur de Bernis, Monsieur de Buffon, and Monsieur de Voltaire, were frequenters of her circle and her dinners. If her reserved manner did not attract many young people, her society inspired the greater awe, as it was composed of graver persons, and the poor Jean-Jacques had no reason to flatter himself that he should be able to take a distinguished part in the midst of such. I therefore had not courage to speak; but, no longer able to contain myself, I ventured to write. For the first two days she said not a word to me upon the subject. On the third day she returned me my letter, accompanying it with a few exhortations which froze my blood. I attempted to speak, but my words expired upon my lips; my sudden passion was extinguished with my hopes, and after a declaration in form, I continued to live with her upon the same terms as before, without so much as speaking to her even by the language of the eyes.

I thought my folly was forgotten, but I was

deceived. Monsieur de Francueil, son to Monsieur Dupin, and stepson to Madame Dupin, was much the same age with herself and me. He had wit, a good person, and might have had pretensions. This was said to be the case, and probably proceeded from his stepmother having given him an ugly wife of a mild disposition, with whom, as well as with her husband, she lived upon the best of terms. Monsieur de Francueil was fond of talents in others, and cultivated those he possessed. Music, which he understood very well, was a means of producing a connection between us. I frequently saw him, and he soon gained my friendship. He, however, suddenly gave me to understand that Madame Dupin thought my visits too frequent, and begged me to discontinue them. Such a compliment would have been proper when she returned my letter; but eight or ten days afterwards, and without any new cause, it appeared to me ill-timed. This rendered my situation the more singular, as Monsieur and Madame de Francueil still continued to give me the same good reception as before. I, however, made the intervals between my visits longer; and I should have wholly ceased calling on them, had not Madame Dupin, by another unexpected caprice, sent to desire I would for eight or ten days take care of her son, who, changing his preceptor, remained alone during that interval. I passed this time in such torments as nothing but the pleasure of obeying Madame Dupin could render supportable; for poor Chenonceaux began to suffer from that craziness which well-nigh

effected the dishonour of his family, and led to his death in the Isle of Bourbon. Whilst I was with him I confined my efforts to preventing him from harming himself or others; yet was this no easy task, and I would not have undertaken to pass eight other days like these, had Madame Dupin given me herself for the recompence.

Monsieur de Francueil conceived a friendship for me, and I studied with him. We began together a course of chemistry at Rouelle's. That I might be nearer at hand, I left the hotel Saint-Quentin, and went to lodge at the Tennis Court, Rue Verdelet, which leads into the Rue Plâtrière, where Monsieur Dupin lived. There, in consequence of a neglected cold, I contracted an inflammation of the lungs that had like to have carried me off. In my younger days I frequently suffered from inflammatory disorders, pleurisies, and especially quinsies, to which I was very subject, and which frequently brought me near enough to death to familiarise me with its image. During my convalescence I had leisure to reflect upon my situation, and to lament my timidity, weakness, and indolence; these, notwithstanding the fire with which I found myself inflamed, left me to languish in an inactivity of mind, continually on the verge of misery. The evening preceding the day on which I was taken ill, I went to hear an opera by Royer, then being performed: the name I have forgotten. Notwithstanding my prejudice in favour of the talents of others, which has ever made me distrustful of my own, I still thought the music

feeble, and devoid of animation and invention. I sometimes had the vanity to flatter myself that I could do better than that. But the terrible idea I had formed of the composition of an opera, and the importance I heard men of the profession affix to such an undertaking, instantly discouraged me, and made me blush at having so much as thought of it. Besides, where was I to find a person to write the words, and one who would give himself the trouble of turning the poetry to my liking? These ideas of music and the opera had possession of my mind during my illness, and in the delirium of my fever I composed songs, duets, and choruses. I am certain I composed two or three little pieces *di prima intenzione*, perhaps worthy of the admiration of masters, could they have heard them executed. Oh! could an account be taken of the dreams of a man in a fever, what great and sublime things would sometimes be seen to result from his delirium!

These subjects of music and opera still engaged my attention during my convalescence, but my ideas were less energetic. Long and frequent meditations, often involuntary, made such an impression upon my mind, that I resolved to attempt both words and music. This was not the first time I had undertaken so difficult a task. Whilst I was at Chambéri I had composed an opera entitled 'Iphis et Anaxarète,' which I had the good sense to throw into the fire. At Lyons I composed another entitled 'La Découverte du Nouveau-Monde,' which, after having read to Monsieur

Bordes, the Abbé Mably, the Abbé Trublet, and others, had met the same fate, notwithstanding I had set the prologue and the first act to music, and although David, after examining the composition, had told me there were passages in it worthy of Buononcini.

On the present occasion, before I began the work, I took time to consider of my plan. In an heroic ballet I proposed three different subjects, in three acts, each detached from the others, and set to music of a different character, taking for each subject the amours of a poet. I entitled this opera 'Les Muses Galantes.' My first act, in music strongly characterised, was 'Tasso'; the second, in tender harmony, 'Ovid'; the third, entitled 'Anacreon,' was to partake of the gaiety of the dithyrambus. I tried my skill on the first act, and applied myself to it with an ardour which made me feel for the first time the delightful flow of thought inspired by composition. One evening, as I entered the opera-house, feeling myself strongly incited and overpowered by my ideas, I put my money again into my pocket, returned to my apartment, locked the door, and, having closely drawn all the curtains, that every ray of light might be excluded, I went to bed, abandoning myself entirely to this musical and poetical œstrum, and in seven or eight hours rapidly composed the greater part of an act. I can truly say my love for the Princess of Ferrara—for I was Tasso for the moment—and my noble and lofty sentiments with respect to her unjust brother, procured me a night a

hundred times more delicious than one passed in the arms of the Princess would have been. In the morning but a very little of what I had done remained in my head, but this little, almost effaced by sleep and lassitude, still sufficiently evinced the energy of the pieces of which it was the scattered remains.

I did not proceed far with my undertaking at this time, being interrupted by other affairs. Whilst I attached myself to the Dupin family, Madame de Beuzenval and Madame de Broglie, whom I continued to visit occasionally, had not forgotten me. The Comte de Montaigu, captain in the Guards, had just been appointed Ambassador to Venice. He was made Ambassador by Barjac,[1] to whom he assiduously paid his court. His brother, the Chevalier de Montaigu, gentilhomme de la manche to Monseigneur le Dauphin, was acquainted with these two ladies, and with the Abbé Alary, of the French Academy, whom I sometimes visited. Madame de Broglie, having heard that the Ambassador was seeking a secretary, proposed me to him. A conference was opened between us. I asked a salary of fifty louis, a trifle for an employment which required me to make some appearance. The Ambassador was unwilling to give more than a hundred pistoles, leaving me to make the journey at my own expense. The proposal was ridiculous. We could not agree, and Monsieur de Francueil, who used all his efforts to prevent my departure, prevailed. I stayed, and Monsieur de Montaigu set out on his journey,

[1] Cardinal de Henry's valet-de-chambre.

taking with him another secretary, one Monsieur Follau, who had been recommended to him by the Office for Foreign Affairs. They no sooner arrived at Venice than they quarrelled. Follau, perceiving he had to do with a madman, left him there, and Monsieur de Montaigu having nobody with him, except a young abbé named Monsieur de Binis, who wrote under the secretary, and was unfit to succeed him, had recourse to me. The Chevalier his brother, a man of wit, by giving me to understand that there were advantages annexed to the place of secretary, prevailed upon me to accept the thousand francs. I was paid twenty louis for my journey, and I departed.

[1743-1744.] At Lyons I would most willingly have taken the road to Mont Cenis, to visit on the way my poor Mamma. But I went down the Rhône, and embarked at Toulon, as well on account of the war, and from a motive of economy, as to obtain a passport from Monsieur de Mirepoix, who then commanded in Provence, and to whom I was recommended. Monsieur de Montaigu, not being able to do without me, wrote letter after letter desiring I would hasten my journey; this, however, an incident considerably prolonged.

It was at the time of the plague at Messina. The English fleet had anchored there, and visited the felucca on board of which I was, and this circumstance subjected us, on our arrival at Genoa, after a long and difficult voyage, to a

quarantine of one-and-twenty days. The passengers had the choice of performing it on board or in the lazaretto, which we were told was not yet furnished. They all chose the felucca. The insupportable heat, the closeness of the vessel, the impossibility of walking in it, and the vermin with which it swarmed, made me at all risks prefer the lazaretto. I was, therefore, conducted to a large building of two stories, quite empty, in which I found neither window, bed, table, nor chair—not so much as even a joint-stool or bundle of straw. My cloak, my night-sack, and my two trunks being brought me, I was shut in by great doors with huge locks, and remained at full liberty to walk at my ease from chamber to chamber and from story to story, everywhere finding the same solitude and nakedness.

This, however, did not induce me to repent that I had preferred the lazaretto to the felucca; and, like another Robinson Crusoe, I began to arrange myself for my one-and-twenty days, just as I should have done for my whole life. In the first place, I had the amusement of destroying the vermin I had caught in the felucca. As soon as I had got clear of these, by means of changing my clothes and linen, I proceeded to furnish the chamber I had chosen. I made a good mattress with my waistcoats and shirts; my napkins I converted, by sewing them together, into sheets; my dressing-gown into a counterpane, and my cloak into a pillow. I made myself a seat with one of my trunks laid flat, and a table with the other. I took out

some writing-paper and an inkstand, and distributed, in the manner of a library, a dozen books which I had with me. In a word, I so well arranged my few movables, that, except curtains and windows, I was almost as commodiously lodged in this lazaretto—absolutely empty as it was—as I had been at the Tennis Court in the Rue Verdelet. My dinners were served with no small degree of pomp; they were escorted by two grenadiers with fixed bayonets; the staircase was my dining-room, the landing-place my table, and the step served me for a seat, and as soon as my dinner was served up a little bell was rung to inform me that I might sit down to table. Between my repasts, when I did not either read or write, or work at the furnishing of my apartment, I went to walk in the burying-ground of the Protestants, which served me as a courtyard. From this place I ascended to a lanthorn which looked into the harbour, and from which I could see the ships come in and go out. In this manner I passed fourteen days, and should have thus passed the whole time of the quarantine without the least weariness, had not M. Joinville, envoy from France—to whom I found means to send a letter, vinegared, perfumed, and half burnt—procured eight days of the time to be taken off. These I spent at his house, where I confess I found myself much better lodged than in the lazaretto. He was extremely civil to me. Dupont, his secretary, was a good fellow; he introduced me, as well at Genoa as in the country, to several families, the company of

which I found very agreeable, and I formed with him an acquaintance and commenced a correspondence which we kept up for a considerable length of time. I continued my journey, very agreeably, through Lombardy. I saw Milan, Verona, Brescia, and Padua, and at length arrived at Venice, where I was impatiently expected by the Ambassador.

I found three piles of despatches from the Court and from other Ambassadors, the ciphered part of which he had not been able to read, although he had all the keys necessary for that purpose. Never having been employed in any office, nor ever seen the cipher of a minister, I was at first apprehensive of meeting with some embarrassment; but I found that nothing could be more easy, and in less than a week I had deciphered the whole, which certainly was not worth the trouble; for, not to mention the little activity required in the embassy of Venice, it was not to such a man as this that a negotiation of even the most trifling importance would be confided. Until my arrival he had been much embarrassed, neither knowing how to dictate nor to write legibly. I was very useful to him, of which he was sensible, and he treated me well. To this he was also induced by another motive. Since the time of Monsieur de Froulay, his predecessor, whose head became deranged, the French consul, Monsieur Le Blond, had been charged with the affairs of the embassy, and, after the arrival of Monsieur de Montaigu, continued to manage them until he had put him into the track. Monsieur de

Montaigu, hurt at this discharge of his duty by another, although he himself was incapable of it, chose to think that the consul played him false, and, as soon as I arrived, deprived him of the functions of secretary to the embassy, to give them to me. They were inseparable from the title, and he told me to take it. As long as I remained with him, he never sent any person except myself under this title to the Senate, or to conference, and upon the whole it was natural enough he should prefer having for secretary to the embassy a man attached to him, rather than a consul, or a clerk of office named by the Court.

This rendered my situation very agreeable, and prevented his gentlemen, who were Italians, as well as his pages and most of his suite, from disputing precedence with me in his house. I made an advantageous use of the authority annexed to the title he had conferred upon me, by maintaining his *droit de liste*—that is, the freedom of his neighbourhood—against the attempts several times made to infringe it, a privilege which his Venetian officers took no care to defend. But, in addition, I never permitted banditti to take refuge there, although this would have produced me advantages of which his Excellency would not have disdained to partake.

He presumed, however, to claim a part of those of the secretaryship relating to what is called the chancery. It was in time of war, and there were many passports issued. For each of these a sequin was paid to the secretary, who made it out and countersigned it. All

my predecessors had been paid this sequin by Frenchmen and others without distinction. I thought this unjust, and, though I was not a Frenchman, abolished it in favour of the French; but I so rigorously demanded my right from persons of every other nation, that the Marquis Scotti, brother to the favourite of the Queen of Spain, having asked for a passport without taking notice of the sequin, I sent to demand it—a boldness which the vindictive Italian did not forget. As soon as the new regulation I had made relative to passports was known, none but pretended Frenchmen, who in a gibberish the most mispronounced called themselves Provençals, Picards, or Burgundians, came to demand them. My ear being sufficiently fine, I was not thus made a dupe, and I am almost persuaded that not a single Italian ever cheated me of my sequin, and that not one Frenchman ever paid it. I was foolish enough to tell Monsieur de Montaigu, who was ignorant of everything that passed, what I had done. The word 'sequin' made him open his ears, and without giving me his opinion of the abolition of that tax upon the French, he pretended that I ought to account to him for the others, promising me at the same time equivalent advantages. More resenting this meanness than concerned for my own interest, I firmly rejected his proposal. He insisted, and I grew warm. 'No, sir,' said I, with some heat, 'your Excellency may keep what belongs to you, but do not take from me that which is mine. I will not suffer you to touch a sou of it.' Perceiving that he could

gain nothing by these means, he had recourse to others, and blushed not to tell me that, since I had appropriated to myself the profits of the chancery, it was but just I should pay the expenses. I was unwilling to dispute upon this subject, and from that time I furnished at my own expense ink, paper, wax, candle, tape, and even a new seal, for which he never reimbursed me to the amount of a liard. This, however, did not prevent my giving a small part of the produce of the passports to the Abbe de Binis, a good creature, and who was far from pretending to have the least right to any such thing. If he was obliging to me, my politeness to him was an equivalent, and we always lived together on the best of terms.

On the first trial I made of his talents in my official functions, I found him less troublesome than I feared he would have been, considering that he was a man without experience, in the service of an Ambassador who possessed no more than himself, and whose ignorance and obstinacy constantly counteracted everything that common-sense and some information inspired me with for his service and that of the King. The most reasonable thing which he did was to ally himself with the Marquis de Mari, Ambassador from Spain, an ingenious and artful man, who, had he wished so to do, might have led him by the nose, yet, on account of the union of the interests of the two crowns, he generally gave him good advice, which might have been of essential service, had not the other, by joining his own opinion, counteracted it in the execution. The

only business they had to conduct in concert with each other was to engage the Venetians to maintain their neutrality. These did not neglect to give the strongest assurances of their fidelity to their engagements at the same time that they publicly furnished munitions to the Austrian troops, and even recruits under the pretence of desertion. Monsieur de Montaigu, who, I believe, wished to render himself agreeable to the Republic, failed not on his part, notwithstanding my representations, to make me give assurance in all his despatches that the Venetians would never violate an article of the neutrality. The obstinacy and stupidity of this poor creature made me write and act extravagantly. I was obliged to be the agent of his folly, because he would have it so; but he sometimes rendered my employment insupportable and the functions of it almost impracticable. For example, he insisted on the greatest part of his despatches to the King, and of those to the minister, being written in cipher, although neither of them contained anything that required that precaution. I represented to him that between the Friday, the day the despatches from the Court arrived, and Saturday, on which ours were sent off, there was not sufficient time to write so much in cipher, and carry on besides the considerable correspondence with which I was charged for the same courier. He found an admirable expedient, which was to prepare on Thursday the answer to the despatches we were expected to receive on the next day. This appeared to him so happily imagined, that not-

withstanding all I could say on the impossibility of the thing, and the absurdity of attempting its execution, I was obliged to comply during the whole time I afterwards remained with him; and, after having made notes of the few loose words he spoke to me in the course of the week, and of some trivial circumstances which I collected by hurrying from place to place, provided with these materials, I never once failed carrying to him on the Thursday morning a rough draft of the despatches which were to be sent off on Saturday, excepting the few additions and corrections I hastily made in answer to the letters which arrived on the Friday, and to which ours served for answer. He had another peculiarity, diverting enough, and which made his correspondence ridiculous beyond imagination. He sent back all information to its respective source, instead of making it follow its course. To Monsieur Amelot he transmitted the news of the Court; to Monsieur Maurepas, that of Paris; to Monsieur d'Havrincourt, the news from Sweden; to Monsieur de Chetardie, that from St. Petersburg; and sometimes to each of those the news they had respectively sent to him, and which I was employed to dress up in somewhat different terms. As he read nothing of what I laid before him, except the despatches from the Court, and signed those to other Ambassadors without reading them, this left me more at liberty to give what turn I thought proper to the latter, and in these therefore I made the articles of information cross each other. But it was impossible

for me to give a rational turn to despatches of importance; and I thought myself happy when he did not take it into his head to cram into them an impromptu of a few lines after his manner. This obliged me to return and hastily transcribe the whole despatch decorated with his new nonsense, and honour it with the cipher, without which he would have refused his signature. I was frequently almost tempted, for the sake of his reputation, to cipher something different from what he had written; but, feeling that nothing could authorise such a deception, I left him to play the fool at his own risk, satisfying myself with having spoken to him with freedom, and discharged at any rate the duties of my station.

This is what I always did with an uprightness, a zeal, and a courage which merited on his part a very different recompense from that which in the end I received from him. It was time I should for once be what Heaven, which had endowed me with a happy disposition, what the education that had been given me by the best of women, and what I had given myself, had prepared me for, and I became so. Left to my own reflections, without a friend or adviser, without experience, in a foreign country, in the service of a foreign nation, surrounded by a crowd of knaves, who, for their own interest, and to avoid the scandal of good example, endeavoured to prevail upon me to imitate them, far from yielding to their solicitations, I rendered good service to France, to which I owed nothing, and to the Ambassador still better, as it was right

and just I should do, to the utmost of my power. Irreproachable in a post sufficiently exposed to censure, I merited and obtained the esteem of the Republic, that of all the Ambassadors with whom we were in correspondence, and the affection of the French who resided at Venice; not even excepting the consul, whom with regret I supplanted in the functions which I knew belonged to him, and which occasioned me more embarrassment than they afforded satisfaction.

Monsieur de Montaigu, wholly giving himself up to the Marquis Mari, who paid no attention to the routine part of his duties, neglected them to such a degree that without me the French who were at Venice would not have perceived that an Ambassador from their nation resided there. Always put off without being heard when they stood in need of his protection, they became disgusted, and no longer appeared in his company or at his table, to which indeed he never invited them. I frequently did from my own impulse what it was his duty to have done: I rendered to the French who applied to me all the services in my power. In any other country I should have done more; but, on account of my position, not being able to see persons in place, I was often obliged to apply to the consul, and the consul, who was settled in the country with his family, had many persons to oblige, which prevented him from acting as he otherwise would have done. However, perceiving him unwilling and afraid to speak, I ventured hazardous measures, which sometimes succeeded. I recollect one which still makes me laugh. No

person would suspect that it is to me the play-goers of Paris owe Coralline and her sister Camille; nothing, however, can be more true. Véronèse, their father, had engaged himself with his children in the Italian company, and, after having received two thousand francs for the expenses of his journey, instead of setting out for France, quietly accepted an engagement in Venice at the Theatre of Saint Luke,[1] to which Coralline, child as she still was, drew great numbers of people. Monsieur le Duc de Gesvres, as first gentleman of the chamber, wrote to the Ambassador to claim the father and the daughter. Monsieur de Montaigu, when he gave me the letter, confined his instructions to saying, 'Voyez cela.' I went to Monsieur Le Blond to beg that he would speak to the patrician to whom the Theatre of Saint Luke belonged, and who, I believe, was named Zustiniani, that he might discharge Véronèse, who had engaged himself to the King. Le Blond, to whom the commission was not very agreeable, executed it badly. Zustiniani answered vaguely, and Véronèse was not discharged. I was piqued at this. It was during the Carnival, and, having taken the *bahute* and a mask, I set out for the Zustiniani Palace. Those who saw my gondola arrive with the livery of the Ambassador were lost in astonishment. Venice had never seen such a thing. I entered, and caused myself to be announced by the name of *una siora maschera*. As soon as I was introduced I took off my mask,

[1] I am doubtful whether it was not Saint Samuel. Proper names continually escape me.—R.

and told my name. The Senator turned pale, and appeared stupefied with surprise. 'Sir,' said I to him in Venetian, 'it is with much regret I importune your Excellency with this visit; but you have in your Theatre of Saint Luke a man named Véronèse, who is engaged for the service of the King, and whom you have been requested, but in vain, to give up. I come to claim him in the name of his Majesty.' My short harangue was effectual. I had no sooner left the palace than my man ran to communicate the adventure to the State Inquisitors, by whom he was severely reprimanded. Véronèse was discharged the same day. I sent him word that if he did not set off within a week I would have him arrested: he obeyed.

On another occasion I relieved from difficulty, solely by my own means, and almost without the assistance of any other person, the captain of a merchant-ship. This was one Captain Olivet, from Marseilles; the name of the vessel I have forgotten. His men had quarrelled with the Sclavonians in the service of the Republic, some violence had been committed, and the vessel was under so severe an embargo that nobody except the master was suffered to go on board, or leave it, without permission. He applied to the Ambassador, who would hear nothing he had to say. He afterwards went to the consul, who told him it was not an affair of commerce, and that he could not interfere in it. Not knowing what further steps to take, he applied to me. I told Monsieur de Montaigu that he ought to permit me to lay before the

Senate a memoir on the subject. I do not recollect whether or not he consented, or whether I presented the memoir; but I perfectly remember that if I did it was ineffectual, and, the embargo still continuing, I took another method, which succeeded. I inserted a relation of the affair in one of our letters to Monsieur de Maurepas, though I had difficulty in prevailing upon Monsieur de Montaigu to suffer the article to pass. I knew that our despatches, although their contents were insignificant, were opened at Venice. Of this I had a proof by finding the articles they contained verbatim in the gazette, a treachery of which I had in vain attempted to prevail upon the Ambassador to complain. My object in speaking of the affair in the letter was to turn the curiosity of the ministers of the Republic to advantage, to inspire them with some apprehensions, and to induce the State to release the vessel; for, had it been necessary to this effect to wait for an answer from the Court, the captain would have been ruined before it could have arrived. I did still more; I went alongside the vessel to make inquiries of the ship's company. I took with me the Abbé Patizel, chancellor of the consulate, who would rather have been excused, so much were these poor creatures afraid of displeasing the Senate. As I could not go on board, on account of the prohibition, I remained in my gondola, and there took the depositions, successively interrogating each of the mariners, and directing my questions in such a manner as to produce answers which might be to their advantage. I wished to prevail upon

Patizel to put the questions and take the depositions himself, which, in fact, was more his business than mine; but to this he would not consent; he never once opened his mouth, and was very unwilling to sign the depositions after me. This step, somewhat bold, was, however, successful, and the vessel was released long before an answer came from the minister. The captain wished to make me a present, but, without being angry with him on that account, I tapped him on the shoulder, saying, 'Captain Olivet, can you imagine that he who does not receive from the French his fee for passports, which he found his established right, is a man likely to sell them the King's protection?' He, however, insisted on giving me a dinner on board his vessel, which I accepted, and took with me the secretary to the Spanish embassy, whose name was Carrio—a man of wit and amiable manners—to partake of it. He has since been secretary to the embassy at Paris, and chargé-des-affaires. I had formed an intimate connection with him, after the example of our Ambassadors.

Happy should I have been if, when in the most disinterested manner I did all the service I could, I had known how to introduce sufficient order into all these little details, that I might not have been fooled into serving others at my own expense. But in employments similar to the one I held, in which the most trifling faults are of consequence, my whole attention was engaged in avoiding all such mistakes as might be detrimental to my service. Till the last

moment I conducted everything relative to my immediate duty with the greatest order and exactness. Excepting a few errors which a forced precipitation made me commit in ciphering, and of which Monsieur Amelot's clerks once complained, neither the Ambassador nor any other person had ever the least reason to reproach me with negligence in any one of my functions. This is remarkable in a man so negligent and hasty as I am. But my memory sometimes failed me, and I was not sufficiently careful in the private affairs with which I was charged. However, a love of justice always made me take the loss on myself, and this voluntarily, before anybody thought of complaining. I will mention but one circumstance of this nature; it relates to my departure from Venice, and I afterwards felt the effects of it in Paris.

Our cook, whose name was Rousselot, had brought from France an old note for two hundred francs, which a hairdresser, a friend of his, had received from a noble Venetian called Zanetto Nani, for the supply of perukes. Rousselot brought me the note, begging I would endeavour to obtain payment of some part of it, by way of accommodation. I knew, and he knew it also, that the constant custom of noble Venetians was, when once returned to their country, never to pay the debts they had contracted abroad. When means are taken to force them to payment, the wretched creditor finds so many delays and expenses that he becomes disgusted, and concludes by giving up his debt, or accepting the most trifling composition. I begged Monsieur Le Blond to

speak to Zanetto. The Venetian acknowledged the note, but did not agree to payment. After a long dispute, he at length promised three sequins; but when Le Blond carried him the note, even these were not ready, and it was necessary to wait. In this interval happened my quarrel with the Ambassador, and I quitted his service. I had left the papers of the embassy in the greatest order, but the note of Rousselot was not to be found. Monsieur Le Blond assured me that he had given it me back. I knew him to be too honest a man to have the least doubt of the matter, but it was impossible for me to recollect what I had done with it. As Zanetto had acknowledged the debt, I desired Monsieur Le Blond to endeavour to obtain from him the three sequins on giving him a receipt for the amount, or to prevail upon him to renew the note by way of duplicate. Zanetto, knowing the note to be lost, would not agree to either. I offered Rousselot the three sequins from my own purse as a discharge of the debt. He refused them, and said I might settle the matter with the creditor in Paris, of whom he gave me the address. The hairdresser, having been informed of what had passed, would either have his note or the whole sum for which it was given. What, in my indignation, would I have given to have found this accursed paper! I paid the two hundred francs, and that in my greatest distress. In this manner, the loss of the note produced to the creditor the payment of the whole sum, whereas, had it—unfortunately for him—been found, he would have had some difficulty in

recovering even the ten crowns which his Excellency Zanetto Nani had promised to pay.

The talents I thought I felt in myself for my employment made me discharge its functions with satisfaction, and, except the society of my friend Carrio, and that of the virtuous Altuna, of whom I shall soon have occasion to speak, the innocent recreations of the Piazza San Marco, of the theatre, and of a few visits which we, for the most part, made together, my only pleasure was in the duties of my station. Although these were not considerable, especially with the aid of the Abbé de Binis, yet, as the correspondence was very extensive, and a war was on foot, I was a good deal employed. I applied to business the greater part of every morning, and on the days previous to the departure of the courier the evenings, sometimes till midnight. The rest of my time I gave to the study of the profession I had entered upon, and in which I hoped, from my successful beginning, to be advantageously employed in the future. In fact, I was in favour with every one, beginning with the Ambassador, who spoke highly of my services, and never complained of anything I did for him; his subsequent dissatisfaction proceeded from my having insisted on quitting him, in consequence of the useless complaints which I had frequently made. The Ambassadors and ministers of the King, with whom we were in correspondence, complimented him on the merit of his secretary, in a manner by which he ought to have been flattered, but which in his weak brain produced quite a con-

trary effect. He received one compliment in particular, relative to an affair of importance, for which he never pardoned me. This deserves to be told more explicitly.

He was so incapable of undergoing constraint, that on Saturday, the day of the despatches for most of the Courts, he could not wait till the business was done before he went out, and, incessantly pressing me to hasten the despatches to the King and ministers, he signed them with precipitation, and immediately went I know not where, leaving most of the other letters without signature. This obliged me, when these last contained nothing but news, to convert them into journals; but when affairs which related to the King were in question it was necessary somebody should sign, and I did it. This once happened relative to some important advice which we had just received from Monsieur Vincent, the King's confidential agent at Vienna. The Prince de Lobkowitz was then marching to Naples, and the Comte de Gages had just made that memorable retreat, the finest military manœuvre of the whole century, which Europe has not sufficiently esteemed. The despatch informed us that a man, whose person Monsieur Vincent described, had set out from Vienna, and was to pass through Venice on his way into the Abruzzo, where he was secretly to stir up the people at the approach of the Austrians. In the absence of Monsieur le Comte de Montaigu, who did not give himself the least concern about anything, I forwarded this advice in such a lucky moment to the Marquis de l'Hôpital, that it is

perhaps to this poor Jean-Jacques, so abused and laughed at, that the House of Bourbon owes the preservation of the kingdom of Naples.

The Marquis de l'Hôpital, when he thanked his colleague, as was proper, spoke to him of his secretary, and mentioned the service he had just rendered to the common cause. The Comte de Montaigu, who in that affair had to accuse himself of negligence, thought he perceived in this compliment something like a reproach, and spoke of it to me with signs of ill-humour. I had found it necessary to act in the same manner with the Comte de Castellane, Ambassador at Constantinople, as I had done with the Marquis de l'Hôpital, although in a matter of less importance. As there was no other conveyance to Constantinople than by the couriers, sent from time to time by the Senate to its Bayle, advice of their departure was given to the Ambassador of France, that he might write by them to his colleague, if he thought proper so to do. This advice was commonly sent a day or two beforehand; but Monsieur de Montaigu was held in so little respect that merely for the sake of form he was sent to a couple of hours before the courier set off. This frequently obliged me to write the despatch in his absence. Monsieur de Castellane in his answer made honourable mention of me; Monsieur de Jonville, at Genoa, did the same; hence arose new grievances.

I acknowledge I did not neglect opportunities of making myself known; but I never sought one improperly, and in serving well I thought

I had a right to aspire to the natural reward of essential services—the esteem of those capable of judging and rewarding them. I will not say whether my exactness in discharging the duties of my employment was a just subject of complaint from the Ambassador; but I cannot refrain from declaring that it was the sole grievance he ever mentioned previous to our separation.

His house, which he had never put upon a good footing, was constantly filled with rabble; the French were ill-treated in it, and the ascendency was given to the Italians; of these even, the more honest part, who had long been in the service of the embassy, were indecently discharged, his first gentleman in particular, whom he had taken from the Comte de Froulay, and who, if I remember rightly, was called Comte de Peati, or something very like that name. The second gentleman, chosen by Monsieur de Montaigu, was a Mantuan bandit, called Dominico Vitali, to whom the Ambassador intrusted the care of his house, and who had by means of flattery and sordid economy obtained his confidence and become his favourite, to the great prejudice of the few honest people he had still about him, and of the secretary who was at their head. The clear gaze of an upright man always gives inquietude to knaves. Nothing more was necessary to make Vitali conceive a hatred against me; but for this sentiment there was still another cause which rendered it more cruel. Of this I must give an account, that I may be condemned if I am found in the wrong.

The Ambassador had, according to custom, a box at each of the five theatres. Every day at dinner he named the theatre to which it was his intention to go. I chose after him, and the gentlemen disposed of the other boxes. When I went out I took the key of the box I had chosen. One day, Vitali not being in the way, I ordered the footman who attended on me to bring me the key at a house which I named to him. Vitali, instead of sending the key, said he had disposed of it. I was the more enraged at this as the footman delivered his message in public. In the evening Vitali wished to make me some apology, to which, however, I would not listen. 'To-morrow, sir,' said I to him, 'you will come at such an hour, and apologise to me in the house where I received the affront, and in the presence of the persons who were witnesses to it; or after to-morrow, whatever may be the consequence, either you or I will leave the house.' This firmness intimidated him. He came to the house at the hour appointed, and made me a public apology, with a meanness worthy of himself. But he afterwards took his measures at leisure, and, at the same time that he cringed to me in public, he wrought so well after the Italian fashion that, although unable to prevail on the Ambassador to give me my dismission, he laid me under the necessity of resigning.

A wretch like him, certainly, could not know me, but he knew enough of my character to make it serviceable to his purposes. He knew I was mild to excess, and patient in bearing

involuntary wrongs, but haughty and impatient when insulted with premeditated offences; loving decency and dignity in things in which these were requisite, and not more exact in requiring the respect due to myself than attentive in rendering that which I owed to others. In this he undertook to disgust me, and in this he succeeded. He turned the house upside down, and destroyed the order and subordination I had endeavoured to establish in it. A house without a woman stands in need of a rather severe discipline to preserve that modesty which is inseparable from dignity. He soon converted ours into a place of filthy debauch and scandalous licentiousness, the haunt of knaves and debauchees. He procured for second gentleman to his Excellency, in the place of him whom he had caused to be discharged, another pimp like himself, who kept a house of ill-fame at the Cross of Malta; and the indecency of these two well-matched rascals was equalled by nothing but their insolence. Except the bed-chamber of the Ambassador—which, however, was not in very good order—there was not a corner in the whole house supportable to a well-mannered man.

As his Excellency did not sup, the gentlemen and myself had a private table, at which the Abbé de Binis and the pages also ate. In the most paltry tavern people are served with more cleanliness and decency, have cleaner linen, and a table better supplied. We had but one little and filthy candle, pewter plates, and iron forks. I could have overlooked what passed in

secret, but I was deprived of my gondola. I was the only secretary to an Ambassador who was obliged to hire one or go on foot, and the livery of his Excellency no longer accompanied me, except when I went to the Senate. Besides, everything which passed in the house was known in the city. All those who were in the service of the Ambassador loudly exclaimed. Dominico, the sole cause of all, exclaimed louder than anybody, well knowing that the indecency with which we were treated was more affecting to me than to any other person. Though I was the only one in the house who said nothing of the matter abroad, I complained loudly of it to the Ambassador, as well as of himself, who, secretly excited by the wretch who was always at his ear, daily made me suffer some new affront. Obliged to expend a good deal to keep on a footing with those in the same situation with myself, and to make an appearance proper to my employment, I could not touch a sou of my salary, and when I asked him for money he spoke of his esteem for me, and his confidence, as if either of these could have filled my purse and provided for everything.

These two bandits at length quite turned the head of their master, who naturally had not a good one, and ruined him by a continual traffic and by cunning bargains, of which he was the dupe, whilst they persuaded him that he was the winner. They induced him to take upon the Brenta a palazzo, at twice the rent it was worth, and divided the surplus with the proprietor. The apartments were inlaid with mosaic, and

ornamented with fine marble columns and pilasters, in the taste of the country. Monsieur de Montaigu had all these superbly masked by fir wainscoting, only because in Paris apartments were thus fitted up. It was for a similar reason that he only, of all the Ambassadors who were at Venice, took from his pages their swords, and from his footmen their canes. Such was the man who, perhaps from the same motive, took a dislike to me on account of my serving him faithfully.

I patiently endured his disdain, his brutality, and ill treatment, as long as, perceiving them accompanied by ill-humour, I thought they had in them no portion of hatred; but the moment I saw the design formed of depriving me of the honour I merited by my faithful services, I resolved to resign my employment. The first mark of his ill-will that I received was relative to a dinner he was to give to the Duke of Modena and his family, who were at Venice, and at which he signified to me I should not be present. I answered, piqued, but not angry, that having the honour daily to dine at his table, if the Duke of Modena, when he came, required that I should not appear at it, my duty, as well as the dignity of his Excellency, would not suffer me to consent to such a request. 'How!' said he passionately, 'my secretary, who is not a gentleman, pretends to dine with a Sovereign when my gentlemen do not!' 'Yes, sir,' replied I; 'the post with which your Excellency has honoured me, as long as I discharge its functions, so far ennobles me that my rank is

superior to that of your gentlemen, or of the persons calling themselves such; and I am admitted where they cannot appear. You cannot but know that on the day on which you shall make your public entry, I am required by etiquette, and by an immemorial custom, to follow you in a dress of ceremony, and afterwards to dine with you at the Palace of Saint Mark; and I know not why a man who may—and indeed must—eat in public with the Doge and the Senate of Venice should not eat in private with the Duke of Modena.' Though this argument was unanswerable, it did not satisfy the Ambassador; but we had no occasion to renew the dispute, as the Duke of Modena did not come to dine with him.

From that moment he did everything in his power to make things disagreeable to me, and endeavoured unjustly to deprive me of my rights by taking from me the little prerogatives annexed to my employment, to give them to his dear Vitali; and I am convinced that, had he dared to send him to the Senate in my place, he would have done it. He usually employed the Abbé de Binis in his closet, to write his private letters; he made use of him to write to Monsieur de Maurepas an account of the affair of Captain Olivet, in which, far from taking the least notice of me, the only person who gave himself any concern about the matter, he deprived me of the honour of the depositions, of which he sent him a duplicate, for the purpose of attributing them to Patizel, who had not opened his mouth. He wished to mortify me,

and please his favourite, but had no desire to dismiss me. He perceived it would be more difficult to find a successor to me than to Monsieur Follau, who had already made him known to the world. A secretary who had a knowledge of Italian was absolutely necessary to him, on account of the answers from the Senate; one who could write all his despatches, and conduct his affairs, without his giving himself the least trouble about anything; a person who, to the merit of serving him well, could join the baseness of being the humble servant of his empty-headed gentlemen. He wished to retain and humble me, by keeping me far from my country and his own, without money to return, and in this he would, perhaps, have succeeded had he begun with more moderation; but Vitali, who had other views, and wished to force me to extremities, carried his point. The moment I perceived that I was losing all my trouble; that the Ambassador imputed to me my services as so many crimes, instead of being satisfied with them; that with him I had nothing to expect but things disagreeable at home, and injustice abroad; and that, in the general disesteem into which he had fallen, his ill offices might be prejudicial to me, without the possibility of my being served by his good ones, I took my resolution, and asked him for my dismission, leaving him sufficient time to provide himself with another secretary. Without answering yes or no, he continued to treat me in the same manner, as if nothing had been said. Perceiving things to remain in the same state,

and that he took no measures to procure himself a new secretary, I wrote to his brother, and, explaining to him my motives, begged he would obtain my dismission from his Excellency, adding that whether I received it or not, I could not possibly remain with him. I waited a long time without any answer, and began to be embarrassed; but at length the Ambassador received a letter from his brother, which must have been couched in very plain terms; for, although he was extremely subject to ferocious rage, I never saw him so violent as on this occasion. After torrents of abominable reproaches, not knowing what more to say, he accused me of having sold his ciphers. I burst into loud laughter, and asked him, in a sneering manner, if he thought there was in Venice a man who would be fool enough to give a crown for them all. This answer caused him to foam with rage. He threatened to call his servants to throw me out of the window. Until then I had been very composed; but, on this threat, anger and indignation seized me in my turn. I sprang to the door, and after having turned a button which fastened it within, 'No, Monsieur le Comte,' said I, returning to him with a grave step, 'your servants shall have nothing to do with this affair; please to let it be settled between ourselves.' My action and manner instantly made him calm; fear and surprise were marked in his countenance. When I saw his fury abated, I bade him adieu in a very few words, and without waiting for his answer, went to the door, opened it, and passed slowly across the

antechamber, through the midst of his people; who rose according to custom, and who, I am of opinion, would rather have lent their assistance against him than against me. Without going back to my apartment, I descended the stairs, and immediately went out of the palace, never more to enter it.

I hastened immediately to Monsieur Le Blond, and related to him what had happened. Knowing the man, he was but little surprised. He kept me to dinner. This dinner, although without preparation, was splendid. All the French of consequence who were at Venice partook of it. The Ambassador had not a single person. The consul related my case to the company. The cry was general, and by no means in favour of his Excellency. He had not settled my account, nor paid me a sou, and being reduced to the few louis I had in my pocket, I was extremely embarrassed about my return to France. Every purse was opened to me. I took twenty sequins from that of Monsieur Le Blond, and as many from that of Monsieur de Saint-Cyr, with whom, next to Monsieur Le Blond, I was the most intimately connected. I returned thanks to the rest; and, till my departure, went to lodge at the house of the chancellor of the consulate, to prove to the public that the nation was not an accomplice in the injustice of the Ambassador. He, furious at seeing me caressed in my misfortune, at the same time that, notwithstanding his being an Ambassador, nobody went near his house, quite lost his senses and behaved like a madman. He

forgot himself so far as to present a memoir to the Senate to get me arrested. On being informed of this by the Abbé de Binis, I resolved to remain a fortnight longer, instead of setting off in a couple of days as I had intended. My conduct had been known and approved of by everybody. I was universally esteemed. The Signiory did not deign to return an answer to the extravagant memoir of the Ambassador, but sent me word by the consul that I might remain in Venice as long as I thought proper, without making myself uneasy about the doings of a madman. I continued to see my friends. I went to take leave of the Ambassador from Spain, who received me well, and of the Comte de Finochietti, minister from Naples, whom I did not find at home. I wrote him a letter, and received the most polite and obliging answer. And at length I took my departure, leaving behind me, notwithstanding my embarrassment, no other debts than the two sums I had borrowed, and of which I have just spoken; and an account of fifty crowns with a shopkeeper, of the name of Morandi, which Carrio promised to pay, and which I have never reimbursed him, although we have frequently met since that time; but with respect to the two loans, I returned them very exactly the moment I had it in my power.

I cannot take leave of Venice without saying something of the celebrated amusements of that city, or at least of the small part of them of which I partook during my residence there. It has been seen how little in my youth I ran after the pleasures of that age, or at least those that are

so called. My inclinations did not change at Venice, but my occupations, which moreover would have prevented this, rendered more agreeable the simple recreations I permitted myself. The first and most pleasing of all was the society of men of merit. Messieurs Le Blond, Saint-Cyr, Carrio, Altuna, and a Forlanian[1] gentleman, whose name I am very sorry to have forgotten, and whom I never call to my recollection without emotion: he was the man of all I ever knew whose heart most resembled my own. We were connected with two or three Englishmen of great wit and information, and, like ourselves, passionately fond of music. All these gentlemen had their wives, female friends, or mistresses: the latter were most of them women of talent, at whose apartments there were balls and concerts. There was but little play; a lively turn, talents, and the theatres rendered that amusement insipid. Play is the resource of none but men whose time hangs heavy on their hands. I had brought with me from Paris the prejudice of that city against Italian music; but I had also received from nature a sensibility and niceness of distinction which prejudice cannot withstand. I soon contracted that passion for Italian music with which it inspires all those who are capable of feeling its excellence. In listening to *barcarolles*, I found I had not yet known what singing was, and I soon became so fond of the opera that, tired of babbling, eating, and gaming in the boxes, when I wished to listen I frequently withdrew from the company to another part of the

[1] A native of Friuli.

theatre. There, quite alone, shut up in my box, I abandoned myself, notwithstanding the length of the representation, to the pleasure of enjoying it at ease to the conclusion. One evening, at the Theatre of Saint Chrysostom, I fell into a more profound sleep than if I had been in my bed. The loud and brilliant airs did not disturb my repose. But who can explain the delicious sensations given me by the soft harmony of the angelic music by which I was charmed from sleep? What an awakening! what ravishment! what ecstasy, when at the same instant I opened my ears and eyes! My first idea was to believe I was in paradise. The ravishing air, which I still recollect and shall never forget, began with these words—

'Conservami la bella
Che si m'accende il cor.'

I was desirous of having it; I had and kept it for a time; but it was not the same thing upon paper as in my head. The notes were the same, but the thing was different. This divine composition can never be executed but in my mind in the same manner as it was on the evening when it awoke me from sleep.

A kind of music far superior, in my opinion, to that of operas, and which in all Italy has not its equal, nor perhaps in the whole world, is that of the *scuole*. The *scuole* are houses of charity, established for the education of young girls without fortune, to whom the Republic afterwards gives a portion either in marriage or for the cloister. Amongst talents cultivated in these young girls, music is in the first rank. Every

Sunday at the church of each of the four *scuole*, during vespers, motets or anthems, with full choruses, accompanied by a great orchestra, and composed and directed by the best masters in Italy, are sung in the galleries by girls only, not one of whom is more than twenty years of age. I have not an idea of anything so voluptuous and affecting as this music: the richness of the art, the exquisite taste of the vocal parts, the excellence of the voices, the justness of the execution, everything in these delightful concerts concurs to produce an impression which certainly is not in exact accordance with the taste of the day, but from which I am of opinion no heart is secure. Carrio and I never failed being present at these vespers of the *Mendicanti*, and we were not alone. The church was always full of lovers of the art, and even the actors of the Opera came there to form their tastes after these excellent models. What vexed me was the accursed iron grate, which suffered nothing to escape but sounds, and concealed from me the angels of which they were worthy. I talked of nothing else. One day I spoke of it at Monsieur Le Blond's. 'If you are so desirous,' said he, 'to see those little girls, it will be an easy matter to satisfy your wishes. I am one of the administrators of the house, I will give you a collation with them.' I did not let him rest until he had fulfilled his promise. In entering the saloon which contained those beauties I so much longed to see, I felt a trembling of love which I had never before experienced. Monsieur Le Blond presented to me, one after the

other, these celebrated female singers, of whom the names and voices were all with which I was acquainted. 'Come, Sophia': she was horrid. 'Come, Cattina': she had but one eye. 'Come, Bettina': the smallpox had entirely disfigured her. Scarcely one of them was without some striking defect. He laughed cruelly at my surprise; however, two or three of them appeared tolerable; these never sang but in the choruses; I was almost in despair. During the collation, we endeavoured to attract their attention, and they soon became enlivened; ugliness does not exclude the graces, which I found they possessed. I said to myself, 'They cannot sing in this manner without intelligence and sensibility, they must have both'; in fine, my manner of seeing them changed to such a degree that I left the house almost in love with each of these ugly faces. I had had scarcely courage enough to return to their vespers; I had now gained reassurance. I still found their singing delightful; and their voices so much embellished their persons, that whilst they sang, in spite of my eyes, I obdurately continued to think them beautiful.

Music in Italy is accompanied with so trifling an expense that it is not worth while for such as have a taste for it to deny themselves the pleasure it affords. I hired a harpsichord, and for half a crown I had at my apartment four or five symphonists, with whom I practised once a week in executing such airs as had given me most pleasure at the Opera. I also had some symphonies performed from my *Muses Galantes*.

Whether these pleased the performers, or the ballet-master of Saint John Chrysostom wished to flatter me, he desired to have two of them, and I afterwards had the pleasure of hearing these executed by that admirable orchestra. They were danced too by little Bettina, a pretty and amiable girl, who lived under the protection of a Spaniard, Monsieur Fagoaga, a friend of ours, with whom we often went to spend the evening.

But, now that I refer to girls of easy virtue, it is not in Venice that a man abstains from them. 'Have you nothing to confess,' somebody will ask me, 'upon this subject?' Yes; I have something to say upon it, and I will proceed to this confession with the same ingenuousness with which I have made all my former ones.

I have always had a distaste for harlots, but at Venice those were all I had within my reach, most of the houses being shut against me on account of my place. The daughters of Monsieur Le Blond were very amiable, but difficult of access; and I had too much respect for the father and mother to entertain a dishonourable thought respecting them.

I should have had a much stronger liking for a young lady named Mademoiselle de Catanéo, daughter to the agent of the King of Prussia; but Carrio was in love with her—there was even between them some question of marriage. He was in easy circumstances, and I had no fortune: his salary was a hundred louis a year, mine amounted to no more that a hundred

pistoles, and, besides my being unwilling to gain by a friend's defeat, I knew that in all places, and especially at Venice, with a purse so ill furnished as mine, gallantry was out of the question. I had not lost the pernicious custom of deceiving my wants. Too busily employed forcibly to feel those proceeding from the climate, I lived upwards of a year in that city as chastely as I had done in Paris; and at the end of eighteen months, I quitted it without having approached the sex, except twice, on the singular occasions of which I am going to speak.

The first was procured me by that honest gentleman Vitali, some time after the formal apology that I obliged him to make me. The conversation at the table turned on the amusements of Venice. The gentlemen reproached me with my indifference with regard to the most delightful of them all, at the same time extolling the grace and elegance of Venetian courtesans, and adding that they were superior to all others in any part of the world. Domenico said I must make an acquaintance with the most amiable of them all; he offered to take me to her apartments, and assured me that I should be pleased. I laughed at this obliging offer; and Comte Peati, a man in years, and venerable, observed to me, with more candour than I should have expected from an Italian, that he thought me too prudent to suffer myself to be led amongst loose women by my enemy. In fact, I had neither intention nor temptation; but, notwithstanding this, by an inconsistency which I cannot myself comprehend, I was at

length prevailed upon to go, contrary to my inclination, the sentiment of my heart, my reason, and even my will—solely from weakness, and being ashamed to show mistrust, and besides, as the expression of the country is, *per non parer troppo coglione*. The *padoana* whom we went to visit was pretty, she was even beautiful, but her beauty was not of that kind which pleased me. Domenico left me with her. I sent for *sorbetti* and asked her to sing. In about half an hour I wished to take my leave, after having put a ducat on the table, but this, by a singular scruple, she refused until she had deserved it, and I, from as singular a folly, consented to remove her scruple. I returned to the palace so fully persuaded that I should feel the consequence of this step that the first thing I did was to send for the surgeon to ask him for medicinal draughts. Nothing can equal the uneasiness of mind I suffered for three weeks, without its being justified by any real inconvenience or apparent sign. I could not believe it was possible to quit with impunity the embraces of the *padoana*. The surgeon himself had the greatest difficulty in removing my apprehensions; nor could he do this by any other means than by persuading me that I was formed in such a manner as not to be easily infected; and, although I have perhaps exposed myself less to such experiences than most other men, my health in that respect having never suffered the least inconvenience is, in my opinion, a proof that the surgeon was right. However, this has never made me imprudent,

and if in fact I have received such an advantage from nature, I can safely assert that I have never abused it.

My second adventure, although likewise with a girl of the town, was of a nature very different, as well in its origin as in its effects. I have already said that Captain Olivet gave me a dinner on board his vessel, and that I took with me the secretary of the Spanish embassy. I expected a salute of cannon. The ship's company were drawn up to receive us, but not so much as a priming was burned, at which I was mortified on account of Carrio, whom I perceived to be rather piqued at the neglect. A salute of cannon was given on board merchant-ships to people of less consequence than we were; besides, I thought that I had deserved some distinguishing mark of respect from the captain. I could not conceal my thoughts, because this is at all times impossible to me, and although the dinner was a very good one, and Olivet did the honours of it perfectly well, I began it in an ill-humour, eating but little and speaking still less.

At the first health I at least expected a volley. Nothing! Carrio, who had read what was passing within me, laughed at seeing me sulk like a child. Before dinner was half over, I saw a gondola approach the vessel. 'Bless me, sir!' said the captain, 'take care of yourself; the enemy approaches.' I asked him what he meant, and he answered jocosely. The gondola made the ship's side, and I observed a fine young damsel come on board, very coquet-

tishly dressed and agile, who at three steps was in the cabin, and seated by my side, before I had time to perceive that a cover was laid for her. She was equally charming and lively, a brunette, not more than twenty years of age. She spoke nothing but Italian, and her accent alone was sufficient to turn my head. As she ate and chatted, she cast her eyes upon me, steadfastly looked at me a moment, and then exclaimed, 'Good Virgin! ah, my dear Brémond, what an age it is since I saw thee!' She then threw herself into my arms, sealed her lips to mine, and pressed me almost to suffocation. Her large black eyes, like those of the beauties of the East, darted fiery shafts into my heart; and although the surprise at first distracted my ideas, voluptuousness made a rapid progress, and this to such a degree that the beautiful seducer herself was, notwithstanding the spectators, obliged to restrain my ardour, for I was intoxicated, or rather furious. When she perceived that she had made the impression she desired, she became more modest in her caresses, but not in her vivacity; and when she thought proper to explain to us the real—or false—cause of all her petulance, she said I resembled Monsieur de Brémond, director of the customs of Tuscany, to such a degree as to be mistaken for him; that she had madly loved this Monsieur de Brémond, and loved him still; that she had quitted him because she was a fool; that she took me in his place; that she would love me because it pleased her so to do, for which reason I must love her as long as it was

THE DINNER ON BOARD

agreeable to her, and when she thought it proper to send me about my business, I must be as patient as her dear Brémond had been. What was said was done. She took possession of me as of a man who belonged to her; she gave me her gloves to keep, her fan, her *cinda*, and her coif, and ordered me to go here or there, to do this or that, and I obeyed. She told me to go and send away her gondola, because she chose to make use of mine, and I immediately sent it away; she bid me move from my place, and beg Carrio to sit down in it, because she had something to say to him, and I did as she desired. They chatted a good while together, but spoke low, and I did not interrupt them. She called me, and I approached her: 'Hark ye, Zanetto,' she said to me, 'I will not be loved in the French manner; this, indeed, will not be well. In the first moment of lassitude, get thee gone; but be wholly mine or not at all, I caution thee.' After dinner we went to see the glass manufactory at Murano. She bought a great number of little curiosities, for which she left us to pay without the least ceremony. But she everywhere bestowed gratuities to a much greater amount than the things we had purchased were worth. By the indifference with which she threw away her money, and suffered us to squander ours, I perceived that she annexed to it but little value. When she insisted upon a payment, I am of opinion it was rather from vanity than avarice. She was flattered by the price her admirers set upon her favours.

In the evening we conducted her to her apartments. As we conversed together, I perceived a couple of pistols upon her toilette. 'Ah! ah!' said I, taking one of them up, 'this is a patch-box of a new construction: may I ask what is its use? I know you have other arms which give more fire than those upon your table.' After a few pleasantries of the same kind, she said to us, with an ingenuous pride which rendered her still more charming, 'When I am complaisant to persons whom I do not love, I make them pay for the weariness they cause me; nothing can be more just; but if I suffer their caresses I will not bear their insults, nor miss the first who shall be wanting to me in respect.'

At taking leave of her I made another appointment for the next day. I did not make her wait. I found her *in vestito di confidenza*, in an undress more than wanton, unknown to northern countries, and which I will not amuse myself in describing, although I recollect it but too well. I shall only remark that her ruffles and collar were edged with silk network ornamented with rose-coloured pompons. This, to my eyes, much enlivened a beautiful complexion. I afterwards found it to be the mode in Venice, and the effect is so charming that I am surprised it has never been introduced in France. I had no idea of the delights which awaited me. I have spoken of Madame de Larnage with the transport which the remembrance of her still sometimes gives me; but how old, ugly, and cold she appeared compared with

my Zulietta! Do not attempt to form to yourself an idea of the charms and graces of this enchanting girl; you will be far too short of truth. Young virgins in cloisters are not so fresh; the beauties of the seraglio are less animated; the houris of paradise are less engaging. Never was so sweet an enjoyment offered to the heart and senses of a mortal. Ah! had I at least been capable of fully tasting of it for a single moment!—I tasted of it, but without a charm. I enfeebled all its delights. I destroyed them at will. No; nature has not made me capable of enjoyment. She has infused into my wretched head the poison of that ineffable happiness, the desire for which she first placed in my heart.

If there be a circumstance in my life which describes my nature, it is that which I am going to relate. The forcible manner in which I at this moment recollect the object of my book will here make me hold in contempt the false delicacy which would prevent me from fulfilling it. Whoever you may be who are desirous of knowing a man, have the courage to read the two or three following pages, and you will become fully acquainted with Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

I entered the chamber of a courtesan, as the sanctuary of love and beauty, and in her person I thought I saw divinity. I should have been inclined to think that without respect and esteem it was impossible to feel anything like that which she made me experience. Scarcely had I, in her first familiarities, discovered the

force and charms of her caresses, before I wished, for fear of losing the fruit of them, to gather it beforehand. Suddenly, instead of the flame which consumed me, I feel a mortal cold run through all my veins; my limbs fail me; and, ready to faint away, I sit down and weep like a child.

Who would guess the cause of my tears, and what at this moment passed within me? I said to myself: The object at my disposal is the masterpiece of nature and of love; her wit and person equally approach perfection; she is as good and generous as she is amiable and beautiful; nobles and princes should be her slaves; sceptres should fall at her feet. Yet, see—she is a miserable prostitute, abandoned to the public. The captain of a merchant-ship disposes of her at will; she throws herself into my arms, although she knows I have nothing; and my merit, with which she cannot be acquainted, can be to her no inducement. In this there is something inconceivable. Either my heart deceives me, fascinates my senses, and makes me the dupe of an unworthy slut, or some secret defect, of which I am ignorant, destroys the effect of her charms, and renders her odious in the eyes of those who would otherwise contend for her favours. I endeavoured, by an extraordinary effort of mind, to discover this defect, but it did not so much as strike me that it might be any disorder connected with her mode of life. The clearness of her skin, the brilliancy of her complexion, her white teeth, sweet breath, and the appearance of neat-

ness about her person, so far removed from me this idea, that, still in doubt relative to my own situation after the affair of the *padoana*, I rather apprehended that I was not sufficiently in health for her, and I am firmly persuaded I was not deceived in my opinion.

These very well-timed reflections agitated me to such a degree that I shed tears. Zulietta, to whom the scene must have been quite novel, was struck speechless for a moment; but having made a turn in her chamber, and, passing before her glass, she comprehended, and my eyes confirmed her opinion, that disgust had no part in this erratic conduct; it was not difficult for her to recover me and dispel this awkward shyness. But, at the moment in which I was ready to faint upon a bosom which seemed to suffer for the first time the impression of the hand and lips of a man, I observed that she had a *téton borgne*.[1] I struck my forehead; I examined, and thought I perceived that this *téton* was not formed like the other. I immediately began to consider how it was possible to have such a defect, and, persuaded of its proceeding from some great natural vice, I revolved the matter in my brain till I was clearly convinced that, instead of the most charming person of whom I could form an idea, I had in my arms a species of monster, the outcast of nature, of men, and of love. I carried my stupidity so far as to speak to her of this *téton borgne*. She at first took what I said jocosely; and in her frolicsome humour did and said things which made me die

[1] Téton qui n'a pas de mamelon.—*Littré*.

of love. But, perceiving an inquietude that I could not conceal, she at length reddened, adjusted her dress, arose, and, without saying a word, went and placed herself at the window. I attempted to place myself by her side; she withdrew to a sofa, rose from it the next moment, and, fanning herself as she walked about the chamber, said to me, in a cold and disdainful tone of voice: 'Zanetto, lascia le donne, e studia la matematica.'

Before I took leave, I requested her to appoint another rendezvous for the next day, which she postponed for three days, adding, with a satirical smile, that I must needs be in want of repose. I was very ill at ease during the interval; my heart was full of her charms and graces. I felt my extravagance, and reproached myself with it, regretting the loss of the moments I had so ill employed, and which, had I chosen, I might have rendered more agreeable than any in my whole life: I awaited with the most burning impatience the moment in which I might repair the loss, and yet, notwithstanding all that had passed, was anxious to reconcile the perfections of this adorable girl with the indignity of her situation. I ran, I flew to her apartment at the hour appointed. I know not whether or not her ardour would have been more satisfied with this visit; her pride at least would have been flattered by it, and I already rejoiced at the idea of my convincing her, in every respect, that I knew how to repair the wrongs I had done. She spared me this experience. The gondolier whom I had sent to her apartment

brought me for answer that she had set off, the evening before, for Florence. If I had not felt all the love I had for her person when this was in my possession, I felt it in the most cruel manner on losing her. Amiable and charming as she was in my eyes, I could have consoled myself for the loss of her; but this I have never been able to do relative to the contemptuous remembrance of me which she must have borne away with her.

These are my two narratives. The eighteen months I passed at Venice furnished me with no other of the same kind, except a simple prospect at most. Carrio was a gallant. Tired of visiting girls engaged to others, he took a fancy to have one to himself, and, as we were inseparable, he proposed to me an arrangement, common enough at Venice, which was to keep one girl for us both. To this I consented. The question was, to find one who was safe. He was so industrious in his researches that he found out a little girl of from eleven to twelve years of age, whom her infamous mother was attempting to sell, and we went together to see her. The sight of the child moved me to the most lively compassion. She was fair, and as gentle as a lamb. Nobody would have taken her for an Italian. Living is very cheap in Venice; we gave a little money to the mother, and provided for the subsistence of her daughter. She had a voice, and to procure her some resource we gave her a spinet, and a singing-master. All this did not cost each of us more than two sequins a month, and spared us much greater

expense in other ways; but as we were obliged to wait until she became of a riper age, this was sowing a long time before we could possibly reap. However, satisfied with passing our evenings chatting and innocently playing with the child, we perhaps enjoyed greater pleasure than if we had received the last favours. So true is it that men are more attached to women by a certain pleasure they have in living with them, than by any kind of libertinism. My heart became insensibly attached to the little Anzoletta, but my attachment was paternal, in which the senses had so little share that in proportion as the former increased, to have connected it with the latter would have been less possible; and I felt I should have experienced, on approaching this little creature when become nubile, the same horror with which the abominable crime of incest would have inspired me. I perceived that the sentiments of Carrio took, unknown to himself, exactly the same turn. We thus prepared for ourselves, without intending it, pleasure not less delicious, but very different from that of which we first had an idea; and I am fully persuaded that, however beautiful the poor child might have become, far from being the corrupters of her innocence, we should have been the protectors of it. The catastrophe which shortly afterwards overtook me deprived me of the happiness of taking a part in this good work, and my only merit in the affair was the inclination of my heart. I will now return to my journey.

My first intention after leaving Monsieur de

Montaigu was to retire to Geneva, until time and more favourable circumstances should have removed the obstacles which prevented my union with my poor Mamma; but the quarrel between me and Monsieur de Montaigu having become public, and he having had the folly to write about it to the Court, I resolved to go there to give an account of my conduct, and complain of that of a madman. I communicated my intention, from Venice, to Monsieur du Theil, charged *per interim* with foreign affairs after the death of Monsieur Amelot. I set off as soon as my letter, and took my route through Bergamo, Como, and Domo d'Ossola, and crossing the Simplon. At Sion, Monsieur de Chaignon, French political agent, showed me great civility; at Geneva Monsieur de La Closure treated me likewise. I there renewed my acquaintance with Monsieur de Gauffecourt, from whom I had some money to receive. I had passed through Nyon without going to see my father, not, indeed, without much regret; but I was unwilling to appear before my stepmother after the disaster which had befallen me, certain of being condemned by her without a hearing. The bookseller Duvillard, an old friend of my father, reproached me severely with this neglect. I gave him my reasons for it, and, to repair my fault, without exposing myself to meet my stepmother, I took a chaise and we went together to Nyon and stopped at an inn. Duvillard went to fetch my father, who came running to embrace me. We supped together, and after passing an evening very agreeable to the

wishes of my heart, I returned the next morning to Geneva with Duvillard, for whom I have ever since retained a sentiment of gratitude in return for the service he rendered me on this occasion.

Lyons was a little out of my direct road, but I was determined to pass through that city in order to convince myself of a knavish trick played me by Monsieur de Montaigu. I had directed to be sent me from Paris a little box containing a waistcoat embroidered with gold, a few pairs of ruffles, and six pairs of white silk stockings; nothing more. Upon a proposal made by himself, I ordered this case—or rather this small box—to be added to his baggage. In the apothecary's bill he offered me in payment of my salary, and which he wrote out himself, he stated the weight of this box, which he called a bale, at eleven quintaux, and charged me with the carriage of it at an enormous rate. By the inquiry of Monsieur Boy de La Tour, to whom I was recommended by Monsieur Roguin, his uncle, it was proved from the registers of the customs of Lyons and Marseilles that the said bale weighed no more than forty-five livres, and had paid carriage according to that weight. I joined this authentic extract to the memoir of Monsieur de Montaigu, and provided with these papers, and others containing stronger facts, I returned to Paris, impatient to make use of them. During the whole of this long journey I had little adventures, at Como, in Valais, and elsewhere. I also saw many curious things, amongst others the Borromean Islands, which are worthy of description. But I am pressed

by time, and surrounded by spies. I am obliged to write in haste, and very imperfectly, a work which requires the leisure and tranquillity I do not enjoy. If ever Providence in its goodness grants me calmer days, I shall destine them to new-modelling this work, should I be able, or at least to giving it a supplement, of which I perceive it stands in great need.[1]

The news of my affair had reached Paris before me, and on my arrival I found the people in all the public offices, and society in general, scandalised at the follies of the Ambassador. Notwithstanding this, the public talk of Venice, and the unanswerable proofs that I exhibited, I could not obtain any sort of justice. Far from getting satisfaction or reparation, I was left at the discretion of the Ambassador even for my salary, and this for no other reason than because, not being a Frenchman, I had no right to national protection, and that it was a private affair between him and myself. Everybody agreed I was insulted, wronged, and unfortunate; that the Ambassador was senseless, cruel, and iniquitous, and that altogether this affair dishonoured him for ever. But what of this? He was the Ambassador, and I was nothing more than the secretary. Order, or that which is so called, was in opposition to my obtaining justice, and I obtained none. I supposed that, by loudly complaining, and by publicly treating this madman in the manner he deserved, I should at length be told to hold my tongue; this was what I wished for, and I

[1] I have renounced this intention.—R.

was fully determined not to obey until judgment had been pronounced. But at that time there was no Minister of Foreign Affairs. I was suffered to exclaim—nay, even encouraged to do it, and joined with—but the business still remained stationary, until, tired of being in the right without obtaining justice, my courage at length failed me, and I let the whole matter drop.

The only person by whom I was ill received, and from whom I should least have expected such an injustice, was Madame de Beuzenval. Full of the prerogatives of rank and nobility, she could not conceive it possible that an ambassador could ever be in the wrong with respect to his secretary. The reception she gave me was conformable to this prejudice. I was so piqued at it that, immediately after leaving her, I wrote her perhaps one of the strongest and most spirited letters that ever came from my pen, and since that time I never once returned to her house. I was better received by Père Castel; but, in the midst of his jesuitical wheedling, I perceived him faithfully to follow one of the great maxims of his society, which is always to sacrifice the weaker to the stronger. The conviction I felt of the justice of my cause, and my natural pride, did not suffer me patiently to endure this partiality. I ceased visiting Père Castel, and, on that account, going to the college of the Jesuits, where I knew nobody but himself. Besides, the intriguing and tyrannical spirit of his brethren, so different from the cordiality of good Père Hemet, gave me such a

dislike for their conversation that I have never since been acquainted with nor seen any one of them, except Père Bertier, whom I saw twice or thrice at Monsieur Dupin's, in conjunction with whom he laboured with all his might at the refutation of Montesquieu.

That I may not return to the subject, I will conclude what I have to say of Monsieur de Montaigu. I had told him in our quarrels that a secretary was not what he wanted, but an attorney's clerk. He took the hint, and the person whom he procured to succeed me was a real attorney, who, in less than a year, robbed him of twenty or thirty thousand livres. He discharged him, and sent him to prison, dismissed his gentlemen with disgrace and scandal, got himself everywhere into quarrels, received affronts which a footman would not have put up with, and, after numerous follies, was recalled and banished to his province. It is very probable that, among the reprimands he received at court, his affair with me was not forgotten. At least, a little time after his return he sent his maitre d'hôtel to settle my account, and give me some money. I was in want of it at that moment. My debts at Venice—debts of honour if ever there were any—lay heavy upon my mind. I made use of the means which offered to discharge these, as well as the note of Zanetto Nani. I received what was offered me, paid all my debts, and remained as before, without a sou, but relieved from a weight which had become insupportable. From that time I never heard a word of Monsieur de Montaigu,

until his death, which became known to me in the news of the day. The peace of God be with that poor man! He was as fit for the functions of an ambassador as in my infancy I had been for those of *grapignan*.[1] However, it was in his power to have honourably supported himself by my services, and rapidly to have advanced me in a career for which the Comte de Gouvon had destined me in my youth, and to execute which I had in a more advanced age rendered myself capable.

The justice and inutility of my complaints left in my mind seeds of indignation against our foolish civil institutions, by which the true welfare of the public and pure justice are always sacrificed to I know not what appearance of order, in reality destructive of order, which does nothing more than add the sanction of public authority to the oppression of the weak and the iniquity of the powerful. Two things prevented these seeds from germinating at that time, as they afterwards did: one was, myself being in question in the affair; and private interest, whence nothing great or noble ever proceeded, could not draw from my heart the divine impulses which only the most pure love of that which is just and sublime can produce. The other was the charm of friendship, which tempered and calmed my wrath by the ascendency of a more pleasing sentiment. I had become acquainted at Venice with a Biscayan, a friend of my friend Carrio, and worthy of being that of every honest man. This amiable young

[1] See vol. i. p. 40.

man, born with every talent and virtue, had just made the tour of Italy to gain a taste for the fine arts, and, imagining he had nothing more to acquire, intended to return by the most direct road to his own country. I told him the arts were nothing more than a relaxation to a genius like his, fit to cultivate the sciences; and, to give himself a taste for these, I advised him to make a journey to Paris and reside there for six months. He took my advice, and went to Paris. He was there, and expected me when I arrived. His lodging was too considerable for him, and he offered me half of it, which I instantly accepted. I found him absorbed in the study of the sublimest sciences. Nothing was above his reach. He digested everything with a prodigious rapidity. How cordially did he thank me for having procured him this food for his mind, which was tormented by a thirst after knowledge, without his being aware of it! What a treasure of light and virtue I found in this vigorous mind! I felt he was the friend I wanted. We soon became intimate. Our tastes were not the same, and we constantly disputed. Both opinionated, we never could agree about anything. Nevertheless we could not separate; and notwithstanding our incessant contradictions, we neither of us wished the other to be different from what he was.

Ignacio Emmanuel de Altuna was one of those rare beings whom only Spain produces, and of whom she produces too few for her glory. He had not the violent national passions common in his own country. The idea of vengeance

could no more enter his head than the desire of it could proceed from his heart. His mind was too great to be vindictive, and I have frequently heard him say, with the greatest coolness, that no mortal could offend him. He was gallant, without being tender. He played with women as with so many pretty children. He amused himself with the mistresses of his friends, but I never knew him to have one of his own, nor the least desire for it. The pure flame of virtue that burned in his heart never suffered sensual fires to spring up there.

After his travels, he married, died young, and left children; and I am as well convinced as of my existence that his wife was the first and only woman with whom he tasted the pleasures of love. Externally he was devout like a Spaniard, but in his heart he had the piety of an angel. Except myself, he is the only man I ever saw whose principles were not intolerant. He never asked any person his opinion in matters of religion. It was of no consequence to him whether his friend was a Jew, a Protestant, a Turk, a bigot, or an Atheist, provided he was an honest man. Obstinate and headstrong in matters of indifference, the moment religion was in question, even the moral part, he collected himself, was silent, or simply said, 'I am charged with the care of myself only.' It is astonishing that so much elevation of mind should be compatible with a spirit of detail carried to minuteness. He divided the employment of the day in advance by hours, quarters, and minutes; and so scrupulously adhered to

this distribution that had the clock struck while he was reading a phrase, he would have shut his book without finishing it. His portions of time thus laid out were some of them set apart to studies of one kind, and others to those of another. He had some for reflection, conversation, divine service, the reading of Locke, for his rosary, for visits, music, and painting; and neither pleasure, nor temptation, nor complaisance could interrupt this order; a duty he might have had to discharge was the only thing that could have done it. When he gave me a list of his distribution, that I might conform myself thereto, I first laughed, and then shed tears of admiration. He never constrained anybody nor suffered constraint himself. He was rather rough with people who from politeness attempted to put it upon him. He was passionate without being sullen. I have often seen him angry, but never saw him fretful. Nothing could be more cheerful than his temper. He knew how to pass and receive a joke; indeed, raillery was one of his distinguished talents, and he could make a pointed epigram. When he was animated by opposition, he spoke noisily, and could be heard at a distance; but, whilst he loudly inveighed, a smile was spread over his countenance, and in the midst of his warmth he used some diverting expression which made all his hearers break out into a loud laugh. He had no more of the Spanish complexion than of the phlegm of that country. His skin was white, his cheeks finely coloured, and his hair of a light chestnut. He was tall and well made.

His body was well formed for the residence of his soul.

This wise-hearted as well as wise-headed man knew mankind, and was my friend; this is my only answer to such as are not so. We were so intimately united that our intention was to pass our days together. In a few years I was to go to Ascoytia to live with him at his estate. Every part of the project was arranged between us on the eve of his departure; nothing was left undetermined, except that which depends not upon men in the best concerted plans: posterior events, my disasters, his marriage, and finally his death, separated us for ever.

Some men would be tempted to say that nothing succeeds except the dark conspiracies of the wicked, and that the innocent intentions of the good are seldom, or never, accomplished.

I had felt the inconvenience of dependence, and took a resolution never again to expose myself to it. Having seen the projects of my ambition, which circumstances had induced me to form, overturned in their birth, discouraged in the career I had so well begun, from which, however, I had just been expelled, I resolved never more to attach myself to any person, but to remain in an independent state, turning my talents to the best advantage. Of these I at length began to feel the extent, having hitherto had too modest an opinion of them. I again took up my opera, which I had laid aside to go to Venice; and that I might be less interrupted after the departure of Altuna, I returned to my old Hôtel Saint-Quentin, which, in a solitary

part of the town, and not far from the Luxembourg, was more proper for quiet work than the noisy Rue Saint-Honoré. There, the only consolation which Heaven has suffered me to taste in my misery, and the only one which has rendered it supportable, awaited me. This was not a transient acquaintance. I must enter into some detail relative to the manner in which it was made.

We had a new landlady from Orléans; she took for a needlewoman a girl from her own country of between twenty-two and twenty-three years of age, and who, as well as the hostess, ate at our table. This girl, named Thérèse Le Vasseur, was of a good family; her father was an officer in the Mint of Orléans, and her mother a shopkeeper; they had many children. The function of the Mint of Orléans being suppressed, the father found himself without employment, and the mother, having suffered losses, was reduced to narrow circumstances. She quitted her business and came to Paris with her husband and daughter, who, by her industry, maintained all three.

The first time I saw this girl at table I was struck with her modest demeanour, and still more with her lively yet charming look, which, with respect to the impression made upon me, was never equalled. Besides Monsieur de Bonnefond, the company was composed of several Irish priests, Gascons, and others of much the same description. Our hostess herself was not very well bred, and I was the only person at table who spoke and behaved with decency.

Allurements were thrown out to the young girl. I took her part, and the joke was then turned against me. Had I had no natural inclination to the poor girl, compassion and contradiction would have produced it in me. I was always a great friend to decency in manners and conversation, especially towards the fair sex. I openly declared myself her champion, and perceived she was not insensible of my attention; her looks, animated by the gratitude she dared not express by words, were for this reason still more penetrating.

She was very timid, and I was as much so as herself. The connection which this disposition, common to both, seemed to repel was, however, rapidly formed. Our landlady, perceiving its progress, became furious; and her brutality forwarded my affair with the young girl, who, having no person in the house except myself to give her the least support, grieved to see me go from home, and sighed for the return of her protector. The affinity our hearts bore to each other, and the similarity of our dispositions, had soon their ordinary effect. She thought she saw in me an honest man, and in this she was not deceived. I thought I perceived in her a girl of sensibility, simple in her manners, and devoid of coquetry. I was no more deceived in her than she in me. I began by declaring to her that I would never either abandon or marry her. Love, esteem, artless sincerity were the ministers of my triumph, and it was because her heart was tender and virtuous that I was happy without being presuming.

The apprehension she was under of my not finding in her that for which she supposed I sought, retarded my happiness more than every other circumstance. I perceived her disconcerted and confused before she yielded her consent, wishing to be understood, and not daring to explain herself. Far from suspecting the real cause of her embarrassment, I falsely imagined it to proceed from another motive, a supposition highly insulting to her morals, and thinking she wished me to understand that my health might be exposed to danger, I fell into so perplexed a state that, although it was no restraint upon me, it poisoned my happiness during several days. As we did not understand each other, our conversations upon this subject were so many enigmas more than ridiculous. She was upon the point of believing I was absolutely mad, and I, on my part, was as near not knowing what to think of her. At last we came to an explanation; she confessed to me with tears the only fault of her life, committed when she was hardly more than a child—the fruit of her ignorance and the art of her seducer. The moment I comprehended what she meant, I gave a shout of joy. 'Virginity!' exclaimed I, 'sought for at Paris, and at twenty years of age! Ah, my Thérèse! I am happy in possessing thee, well-behaved and healthy as thou art, and in not finding that for which I never sought.'

At first, amusement was my only object; I perceived I had gone further, and had given myself a companion. A little intimate con-

nection with this excellent girl, and a few reflections upon my situation, made me discover that, while thinking of nothing more than my pleasures, I had done a great deal towards my happiness. In the place of extinguished ambition, a lively sentiment, which should take entire possession of my heart, was necessary to me. In a word, I wanted a successor to Mamma. Since I was never again to live with her, it was necessary some person should live with her pupil, and a person, too, in whom I might find that simplicity and docility of mind and heart which she had found in me. It was necessary that the happiness of domestic life should indemnify me for the splendid career I had just renounced. When I was quite alone there was a void in my heart, which wanted nothing more than another heart to fill it up. Fate had deprived me of this, or, at least in part, alienated me from that for which by nature I was formed. From that moment I was alone, for there never was for me anything intermediate between everything and nothing. I found in Thérèse the supplement of which I stood in need; by means of her I lived as happily as I possibly could, according to the course of events.

I first attempted to improve her mind. In this my pains were useless. Her mind is as nature formed it; it is not susceptible of cultivation. I do not blush in acknowledging that she never knew how to read well, although she writes tolerably. When I went to lodge in the Rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs, at the Hôtel de

Pontchartrain, opposite to my windows, there was a dial, on which for a whole month I used all my efforts to teach her to tell the hours; yet she scarcely knows them at present. She never could enumerate the twelve months of the year in order, and cannot distinguish one numeral from another, notwithstanding all the trouble I took in endeavouring to teach them to her. She neither knows how to count money, nor to reckon the price of anything. The word which presents itself to her mind when speaking is frequently the opposite to that of which she means to make use. I formerly made a dictionary of her phrases, to amuse Madame de Luxembourg, and her quid-pro-quos became celebrated among those with whom I was intimate. But this person, so limited in her intellect, and, if the world pleases, so stupid, can give excellent advice in cases of difficulty. In Switzerland, in England, and in France, when catastrophe overtook me, she frequently saw what I had not myself perceived: she has often given me the best counsel I could possibly follow; she has rescued me from danger into which I had blindly precipitated myself; and in the presence of ladies of the highest rank, of princes and of the great, her sentiments, good sense, answers, and conduct have acquired her universal esteem, and myself the most sincere congratulations on her merit.

With persons whom we love, sentiment fortifies the mind as well as the heart; and they who are thus attached have little need of searching for ideas elsewhere. I lived with my

Thérèse as agreeably as with the finest genius in the world. Her mother, proud of having been brought up under the Marquise de Monpipeau, attempted to be witty, wished to direct the judgment of her daughter, and, by her cunning ways, destroyed the simplicity of our intercourse. The fatigue of this importunity made me in some degree surmount the foolish shame which prevented me from appearing with Thérèse in public; and we took short country walks by ourselves, and partook of little collations, which to me were delicious. I perceived that she loved me sincerely, and this increased my tenderness. This charming intimacy superseded all else; futurity no longer gave me the least concern, or, at most, appeared only a prolongation of the present. I had no other desire than that of ensuring its duration.

This attachment rendered all other dissipation superfluous and insipid to me. I never went out but for the purpose of going to the apartment of Thérèse; her dwelling almost became my own. This retired mode of life was so favourable to the work I had undertaken that in less than three months my opera was entirely finished, both words and music, except a few accompaniments and fillings-up which still remained to be added. This mechanical sort of work was very irksome to me. I proposed it to Philidor, offering him, at the same time, a part of the profits. He came twice, and did something to the middle parts in the act of 'Ovid'; but he could not bind himself to an

assiduous application by the allurement of advantages which were distant and uncertain. He did not come a third time, and I finished the work myself.

My opera completed, the next thing was to make something of it; this was by much the more difficult task of the two. A man living in solitude in Paris will never succeed in anything. I was on the point of making my way by means of Monsieur de La Poplinière, to whom Gauffecourt, on my return to Geneva, had introduced me. Monsieur de La Poplinière was the Mæcenas of Rameau, Madame de La Poplinière his very humble scholar. Rameau was said to govern in that house. Judging that he would with pleasure protect the work of one of his disciples, I wished to show him what I had done. He refused to examine it, saying he could not read scores; it was too fatiguing to him. Monsieur de La Poplinière, to obviate this difficulty, said he might hear it, and offered to send for musicians to execute detached pieces. I wished for nothing better. Rameau consented with an ill grace, incessantly repeating that the composition of a man not regularly bred to the science, and who had learned music without a master, must certainly be very fine! I hastened to copy into parts five or six select passages. Ten symphonists were procured, and Albert, Bérard, and Mademoiselle Bourbonnais undertook the vocal parts. Rameau, the moment he heard the overture, began to make the company understand, by his extravagant eulogies, that it could not be my composition. He showed

signs of impatience at every passage; but after a counter-tenor song, the air of which was noble and harmonious, with a brilliant accompaniment, he could no longer contain himself; he apostrophised me with a brutality at which everybody was shocked, maintaining that a part of what he had heard was by a man experienced in the art, and the rest by some ignorant person who did not so much as understand music. It is true my composition, unequal and without rule, was sometimes sublime and at others insipid, as that of a person who forms himself in an art by the inspiration of his own genius, unsupported by science, must necessarily be. Rameau pretended to see nothing in me but a contemptible pilferer, without talents or taste. The rest of the company, among whom I must distinguish the master of the house, were of a different opinion. Monsieur de Richelieu, who at that time frequently visited Monsieur and, as is well known, Madame de La Poplinière, heard of my work, and wished to hear the whole of it, with an intention, if it pleased him, to have it performed at Court. The opera was executed with full choruses, and a great orchestra, at the expense of the King, at Monsieur de Bonneval's, intendant des menus. Francœur directed the band. The effect was surprising. Monsieur le Duc never ceased to exclaim and applaud; and, at the end of one of the choruses in the act of 'Tasso,' he rose and came to me, and, pressing my hand, said: 'Monsieur Rousseau, this is transporting harmony. I never heard anything finer. I will

get this performed at Versailles.' Madame de La Poplinière, who was present, said not a word. Rameau, although invited, had refused to come. The next day, Madame de La Poplinière received me at her toilette very ungraciously, affecting to undervalue my piece, and told me that although a little false glitter had at first dazzled Monsieur de Richelieu, he had recovered from his error, and she advised me not to place much dependence upon my opera. Monsieur le Duc arrived soon after, and spoke to me in quite a different language. He said very flattering things about my talents, and seemed as much disposed as ever to have my composition performed before the King. 'There is nothing,' said he, 'but the act of "Tasso" which cannot pass at Court. You must write another.' Upon this single word I shut myself up in my apartment; and in three weeks produced, in the place of 'Tasso,' another act, the subject of which was 'Hesiod inspired by one of the Muses.' Into this I found the secret of introducing a part of the history of my talents, and of the jealousy with which Rameau had been pleased to honour me. There was in the new act an elevation less gigantic and better sustained than in the act of 'Tasso.' The music was as noble and the composition better; and, had the other two acts been equal to this, the whole piece would have supported a representation to advantage. But whilst I was endeavouring to give it the last touches, another undertaking suspended the completion of that I had in hand.

[1745-1747.] In the winter which succeeded the battle of Fontenoy there were many fêtes at Versailles, and several operas performed at the Théâtre des Petites-Écuries. Among the number of the latter was the dramatic piece of Voltaire entitled *La Princesse de Navarre*, the music by Rameau, which had been altered and recast under the name of *Les Fêtes de Ramire*. This new subject required several changes to be made in the divertissements, as well in the poetry as in the music. A person capable of both was now sought after. Voltaire, then in Lorraine, and Rameau, both of whom were employed on the opera of *Le Temple de la Gloire*, could not give their attention to this. Monsieur de Richelieu thought of me, and sent to desire I would undertake the alterations; and, that I might the better examine what there was to do, he gave me separately the poem and the music. In the first place, I would not touch the words without the consent of the author, to whom I wrote upon the subject a very polite and respectful letter, such a one as was proper; and received from him the following, the original of which is in packet A, No. 1:—

'*December 15th*, 1745.

'MONSIEUR,—In you two talents, which hitherto have always been separate, are united. These are two good reasons for me to esteem and to endeavour to love you. I am sorry, on your account, that you should employ these talents in a work which is so little worthy of them. A few months ago Monsieur le Duc de Richelieu commanded me to make, absolutely in the twinkling of an eye, a little

and bad sketch of a few insipid and imperfect scenes to be adapted to divertissements which are not of a nature to be joined with them. I obeyed with the greatest exactness. I wrote very fast, and very ill. I sent this wretched production to Monsieur le Duc de Richelieu, imagining he would make no use of it, or that I should have an opportunity of correcting it. Happily it is in your hands, and you are at full liberty to do with it whatever you please. I have entirely lost sight of the thing. I doubt not but you will have corrected all the faults which cannot but abound in so hasty a composition of a simple sketch, and will have supplied whatever was wanting.

'I remember that, among other stupidities, no account is given in the scenes which connect the divertissements of the manner in which the Princess Grenadine immediately passes from a prison to a garden or palace. As it is not a magician but a Spanish nobleman who gives her the gala, I am of opinion that nothing should be effected by enchantment. I beg, monsieur, that you will examine this part, of which I have but a confused idea. You will likewise consider whether or not it be necessary the prison should be opened, and the princess conveyed from it to a fine palace, gilt and varnished, and prepared for her. I know all this is wretched, and that it is beneath a thinking being to make a serious affair of such trifles; but since we must displease as little as possible, it is necessary we should conform to reason, even in a bad divertissement of an opera.

'I depend wholly upon you and Monsieur Ballod, and soon expect to have the honour of returning you my thanks, and assuring you how much I am,' etc.

There is nothing surprising in the great politeness of this letter, compared with the almost rude ones which he has since written to me. He thought I was in great favour with Monsieur de Richelieu; and the courtly suppleness which every one knows to be the character of this author obliged him to be extremely polite to a new-comer, until he should become better acquainted with the measure of the patronage he enjoyed.

Authorised by Monsieur de Voltaire, and not under the necessity of giving myself the least concern about Rameau, who only endeavoured to injure me, I set to work, and in two months my undertaking was finished. With respect to the poetry, it was confined to a mere trifle. I aimed at nothing more than to prevent the difference of style from being perceived, and had the vanity to think I had succeeded. The musical part was longer and more laborious. Besides my having to compose several preparatory pieces, and amongst others the overture, all the recitative, with which I was charged, was extremely difficult on account of the necessity there was of connecting, in a few verses, and by very rapid modulations, symphonies and choruses, in keys very different from each other; for I was determined neither to change nor transpose any of the airs, that Rameau might not accuse me of having disfigured them. I succeeded in the recitative; it was well accented, full of energy and excellent modulation. The idea of two men of superior talents with whom I was associated had elevated my genius, and I

can assert that, in this barren and inglorious task, of which the public could have no knowledge, I was for the most part equal to my models.

The piece, in the state to which I had brought it, was rehearsed in the great theatre of the Opera. Of the three authors who had contributed to the production, I was the only one present. Voltaire was not in Paris, and Rameau either did not come, or concealed himself.

The words of the first monologue were very mournful; they began with—

'O mort! viens terminer les malheurs de ma vie.'

To these suitable music was necessary. It was, however, upon this that Madame de La Poplinière founded her censure, accusing me with much bitterness of having composed a funeral anthem. Monsieur de Richelieu very judiciously began by informing himself who was the author of the poetry of this monologue; I presented him the manuscript he had sent me, which proved it was by Voltaire. 'In that case,' said he, 'Voltaire alone is to blame.' During the rehearsal, everything I had done was disapproved by Madame de La Poplinière, and defended by Monsieur de Richelieu; but I had afterwards to do with too powerful an adversary. It was signified to me that several parts of my composition wanted revising, and that on these it was necessary I should consult Monsieur Rameau. My heart was wounded by such a conclusion, instead of the eulogium I expected, and which certainly I merited, and I returned to my apartment

overwhelmed with grief, exhausted with fatigue, and consumed by chagrin. I was immediately taken ill, and confined to my chamber for upwards of six weeks.

Rameau, who was charged with the alterations indicated by Madame de La Poplinière, sent to ask me for the overture of my great opera, to substitute it for that I had just composed. Happily I perceived the trick he intended to play me, and refused him the overture. As the performance was to be in five or six days, he had not time to make one, and was obliged to leave that which I had prepared. It was in the Italian taste, and in a style at that time quite new in France. Nevertheless, it gave satisfaction, and I learned from Monsieur de Valmalette, maître d'hôtel to the King, and son-in-law to Monsieur Mussard, my relation and friend, that the connoisseurs were highly satisfied with my work, and that the public had not distinguished it from that of Rameau. However, he and Madame de La Poplinière took measures to prevent any person from knowing I had any concern in the matter. In the books distributed to the audience, and in which the authors are always named, Voltaire was the only person mentioned, and Rameau preferred the suppression of his own name to seeing it associated with mine.

As soon as I was in a situation to leave my room, I wished to wait upon Monsieur de Richelieu, but it was too late; he had just set off for Dunkirk, where he was to command the expedition destined to Scotland. At his return,

said I to myself, to authorise my idleness, it will be too late for my purpose. Not having seen him since, I lost the honour of my work and the emoluments it should have produced me, without reckoning my time, trouble, grief, and vexation, my illness, and the money this cost me, without ever receiving the least benefit, or rather recompense. However, I always thought Monsieur de Richelieu was disposed to serve me, and that he had a favourable opinion of my talents; but my ill luck and Madame de La Poplinière prevented the effect of his good wishes.

I could not divine the reason of the aversion this lady had to me. I had always endeavoured to make myself agreeable to her, and regularly paid her my court. Gauffecourt explained to me the causes of her dislike. 'The first,' said he, 'is her friendship for Rameau, of whom she is the declared panegyrist, and who will not suffer a competitor; the next is an original sin, which ruins you in her estimation, and which she will never forgive: you are a Genevese.' Upon this he told me that the Abbé Hubert, who was from the same city, and the sincere friend of Monsieur de La Poplinière, had used all his efforts to prevent him from marrying this lady, with whose character he was very well acquainted; and that after the marriage she had vowed him an implacable hatred, as well as all the Genevese. 'Although La Poplinière has a friendship for you, and that is known to me, do not,' said he, 'depend upon his protection. He is still in love with his wife: she hates you, and

is vindictive and artful: you will never make any progress in that house.' All this I took for granted.

This same Gauffecourt rendered me much about this time a service of which I stood in the greatest need. I had just lost my virtuous father, who was about sixty years of age. I felt this loss less severely than if it had happened at any other time, when the embarrassments of my situation had less engaged my attention. During his lifetime I had never claimed what remained of the property of my mother, and of which he received the little interest. His death removed all my scruples upon this subject. But the want of legal proof of my brother's death created a difficulty, which Gauffecourt undertook to remove, and this he effected by means of the good offices of the advocate De Lolme. As I stood in need of this little resource, and the event being doubtful, I waited for a definite result with the greatest anxiety. One evening, on entering my apartment, I found a letter which I knew must contain the information I wanted, and I took it up with an impatient trembling, of which I was inwardly ashamed. 'What!' said I to myself with disdain, 'shall Jean-Jacques thus suffer himself to be subdued by interest and curiosity?' I immediately replaced the letter upon the chimneypiece. I undressed myself, went to bed with great composure, slept better than usual, and rose in the morning at a late hour, without thinking more of my letter. As I was dressing myself, it caught my eye. I broke the seal very leisurely,

and found under the envelope a bill of exchange. I felt a variety of pleasing sensations at the same time; but I can swear that the most lively of them all was that proceeding from having known how to master myself. I could mention twenty such circumstances in my life, but I am too much pressed for time to say everything. I sent a small part of this money to my poor Mamma, regretting, with my eyes suffused with tears, the happy time when I should have laid it all at her feet. All her letters contained evident marks of her distress. She sent me piles of recipes and secrets, with which she pretended I might make my fortune and her own. The idea of her wretchedness already affected her heart and contracted her mind. The little I sent her fell a prey to the knaves by whom she was surrounded; she received no advantage from anything. The idea of dividing what was necessary to my own subsistence with these wretches disgusted me; especially after the vain attempt I made to deliver her from them, and of which I shall have occasion to speak.

Time slipped away, and with it the little money I had; we were two, or indeed, four persons; or, to speak more correctly, seven or eight. Although Thérèse was disinterested to a degree of which there are but few examples, her mother was not so. She was no sooner a little relieved from her necessities by my cares, than she sent for her whole family to partake of the fruits of them. Her sisters, sons, daughters, granddaughters—all, except her eldest daughter, married to the director of the Angers coaches—

came to us. Everything I did for Thérèse her mother diverted from its original destination, in favour of these never-satisfied folk. As I had not to do with an avaricious person, and was not under the influence of an unruly passion, I was not guilty of follies. Satisfied with honestly supporting Thérèse, without luxury, and unexposed to pressing wants, I consented to let all the earnings of her industry go to the support of her mother; and to this even I did not confine myself; but, by a fatality by which I was pursued, whilst Mamma was a prey to the rascals about her, Thérèse was the same to her family: and I could not do anything on either side for the benefit of her to whom the succour was destined. It was odd enough that the youngest child of Madame Le Vasseur, the only one who had not received a marriage portion from her parents, should provide for their subsistence; and that, after having a long time been beaten by her brothers, sisters, and even her nieces, the poor girl should be plundered by them all, without being better able to defend herself from their thefts than from their blows. One of her nieces, named Goton Leduc, was of a mild and amiable character, although spoiled by the lessons and examples of the others. As I frequently saw them together, I gave them names which they gave to each other; I called the niece 'my niece,' and the aunt 'my aunt'; they both called me 'uncle.' Hence the name of 'aunt,' by which I continued to call Thérèse, and which my friends sometimes jocosely repeated.

It will be judged that in such a situation I

had not a moment to lose before I attempted to extricate myself. Judging Monsieur de Richelieu had forgotten me, and having no more hopes from the Court, I made some attempts to get my opera brought out at Paris; but I met with difficulties which time alone could remove, and my situation became daily more painful. I presented my little comedy of *Narcisse* to the Italiens; it was received, and I had the freedom of the theatre, which gave me much pleasure. But this was all; I could never get my piece performed, and, tired of paying my court to players, I gave myself no more trouble about them. At length I had recourse to the last expedient which remained to me, and the only one of which I ought to have made use. While frequenting the house of Monsieur de La Poplinière, I had neglected the Dupin family. The ladies of the two households, although related, were not upon good terms, and never saw each other. There was not the least intercourse between the two families, and Thieriot was the only person who visited both. He was desired to endeavour to bring me again to Monsieur Dupin's. Monsieur de Francueil was then studying natural history and chemistry, and collecting a cabinet. I believe he aspired to become a member of the Academy of Sciences; to this effect he intended to write a book, and judged I might be of use to him in the undertaking. Madame Dupin, who, on her part, had another work in contemplation, had much the same views with respect to me. They wished to have me in common as a kind of secretary, and this was the reason

of the invitations of Thieriot. I required in the first instance that Monsieur de Francueil should employ his interest with that of Jelyote to get my work rehearsed at the Opera. To this he consented. *Les Muses Galantes* was several times rehearsed, first at the *magasin*, and afterwards in the great theatre. The audience was very numerous at the full rehearsal, and several parts of the composition were highly applauded. However, during this rehearsal—very ill conducted by Rebel—I felt that the piece would not be received, and that, before it could appear, great alterations were necessary. I therefore withdrew it without saying a word, or exposing myself to a refusal; but I plainly perceived, by many indications, that the work, had it been perfect, could not have succeeded. Monsieur de Francueil had promised me to get it rehearsed, but not that it should be received. He exactly kept his word. I thought I perceived on this occasion, as well as many others, that neither he nor Madame Dupin was willing that I should acquire a certain reputation in the world, lest, after the publication of their books, it should be supposed that they had grafted their talents upon mine. Yet, as Madame Dupin always supposed those I had to be very moderate, and never employed me save to write what she dictated, or in research of pure erudition, the reproach, in respect to her, would have been unjust.

[1747-1749.] This last failure completed my discouragement. I abandoned every prospect of fame and advancement; and, without further

troubling my head about real or imaginary talents, with which I had so little success, I dedicated my whole time and cares to procure for myself and Thérèse a subsistence in the manner most pleasing to those to whom it should be agreeable to provide for it. I therefore entirely attached myself to Madame Dupin and Monsieur de Francueil. This did not place me in a very opulent situation; for, with eight or nine hundred francs a year, which I had the two first years, I had scarcely enough to provide for my primary wants, being obliged to live in their neighbourhood—a dear part of the town—in a furnished lodging, and having to pay for another lodging at the extremity of Paris, at the very top of the Rue Saint-Jacques, whither, let the weather be as it would, I went almost every evening to supper. I soon got into the track of my new occupations, and conceived a taste for them. I attached myself to the study of chemistry, and attended several courses of it with Monsieur de Francueil at Monsieur Rouelle's, and we began to scribble upon that science, of which we scarcely possessed the elements. In 1747 we went to pass the autumn in Touraine, at the Château de Chenonceaux, a royal mansion upon the Cher, built by Henry II. for Diane de Poitiers, of whom the ciphers are still visible, and which is now in the possession of Monsieur Dupin, a farmer-general. We amused ourselves very agreeably in this beautiful place, and lived very well. I became there as fat as a monk. Music was a favourite relaxation. I composed several trios for the voice, full of

harmony, and of which I may perhaps speak in my supplement, if ever I should write one. Plays were acted there. I wrote a comedy in fifteen days, entitled *L'Engagement Téméraire*, which will be found amongst my papers; it has no other merit than that of being very sprightly. I composed several other little things; amongst others, a poem entitled *L'Allée de Sylvie*, from the name of a walk in the park upon the banks of the Cher; and this without discontinuing my chemical studies, or interrupting what I had to do for Madame Dupin.

Whilst I was increasing my corpulency at Chenonceaux, that of my poor Thérèse was augmented at Paris in another manner, and at my return I found the work I had put upon the frame in greater forwardness than I had expected. This, on account of my situation, would have thrown me into the greatest embarrassment, had not my messmates furnished me with the only resource which could relieve me from it. This is one of those essential narratives which I cannot give with too much simplicity; because it is necessary, in commenting upon them, either to excuse or blame myself, and that here I should not do the one nor the other.

During the stay of Altuna at Paris, instead of taking our meals at a traiteur's, he and I commonly ate in our own neighbourhood, almost opposite the cul-de-sac of the Opera, at the house of one Madame La Selle, the wife of a tailor, who gave but poor dinners, but whose table was much frequented, on account of the respectability of the company which resorted to it. No

person was received without being introduced by one of those who used the house. The Commandeur de Graville, an old debauchee, with much wit and politeness, but obscene in conversation, lodged at the house, and brought to it a set of riotous and dashing young men, officers in the Guards and Mousquetaires. The Commandeur de Nonant, chevalier to all the girls of the Opera, was the daily oracle which conveyed to us the news of this tavern. Monsieur du Plessis, a lieutenant-colonel retired from the service, an old man of great goodness and wisdom; and Monsieur Ancelet,[1] an officer in the Mousquetaires, kept the young people in a certain kind of order. The table was also frequented by commercial people, financiers, and army contractors, but extremely polished and upright, and such as were distinguished amongst those of the same profession; Monsieur de Besse, Monsieur de Forcade, and others whose names I have forgotten. In short, well-dressed people of every description were seen there, except abbés and men of the long robe, not one of

[1] It was to this Monsieur Ancelet that I gave a little comedy, after my own manner, entitled *Les Prisonniers de Guerre*, which I wrote after the disasters of the French in Bavaria and Bohemia. I dared not either avow this comedy or show it, and this for the singular reason that neither the King of France, nor France itself, nor the French, were ever better spoken of, nor praised with more sincerity of heart than in this piece; and that, republican and avowed *frondeur* as I was, I dared not declare myself the panegyrist of a nation whose maxims were exactly the reverse of my own. More grieved at the misfortunes of France than the French themselves, I was afraid the public would construe into flattery and cowardice the marks of a sincere attachment of which in my First Part I have mentioned the date and the cause, and which I was ashamed to show.—R.

whom I ever met in the house, and it was agreed not to introduce men of either of these professions. This table, sufficiently resorted to, was very cheerful without being noisy, and many of the guests were waggish, without descending to grossness. The old Commandeur, with all his indelicate stories, with respect to their substance, never lost sight of the politeness of the Old Court; nor did any indecent expression which women would not have pardoned him escape his lips. His manner served as a rule to every person at table. All the young men related their adventures of gallantry with equal grace and freedom, and these narratives were the more complete as the seraglio was at the very door, for in the alley leading to Madame de La Selle's was the shop of La Duchapt, a celebrated dressmaker, who employed some very pretty damsels, with whom our young gentlemen went to chat before or after dinner. I should thus have amused myself as well as the rest, had I been a little bolder. I had only to go in as they did, but this I dared not do. With respect to Madame La Selle, I often went to eat at her house after the departure of Aktuna. I learned there a great number of amusing anecdotes, and by degrees I adopted, thank God, not the morals, but the maxims I found to be established there. Honest men injured, husbands deceived, women seduced, secret lyings-in, were the most ordinary topics, and he who had best filled the Enfants-Trouvés was always the most applauded. I caught the manners I daily had before my eyes; I formed my manner of thinking upon that

which I observed to be the reigning one amongst amiable and, upon the whole, very honourable people. I said to myself, 'Since it is the custom of the country, they who live here may adopt it. This is the expedient for which I sought.' I cheerfully determined upon it without the least scruple, and the only one I had to overcome was that of Thérèse, whom, with the greatest imaginable difficulty, I persuaded to adopt this only means of saving her honour. Her mother, who was moreover apprehensive of a new embarrassment by an increase of family, came to my aid, and she at length suffered herself to be prevailed upon. We made choice of a midwife, a safe and prudent woman, Mademoiselle Gouin, who lived at the Pointe Saint-Eustache, to intrust with this business; and when the time came Thérèse was conducted by her mother to La Gouin's house, there to remain during her confinement. I went thither several times to see her, and gave her a cipher which I had duplicated upon two cards; one of them was put into the linen of the child, and by the midwife deposited with the infant in the office of the Enfants-Trouvés, according to the customary form. The year following a similar inconvenience was remedied by the same expedient, excepting the cipher, which was forgotten: no more reflection on my part, nor approbation on that of the mother; she obeyed with trembling. All the vicissitudes which this fatal conduct has produced in my manner of thinking, as well as in my destiny, will be successively seen. For the present we will confine ourselves to this first

period: its cruel and unforeseen consequences will but too frequently oblige me to refer to it.

I may here mark my first acquaintance with Madame d'Épinay, whose name will frequently appear in these memoirs. She was a Mademoiselle d'Esclavelles, and had lately been married to Monsieur d'Épinay, son of Monsieur de Lalive de Bellegarde, of Berne, a farmer-general. Her husband, like Monsieur de Francueil, was a musician. She too understood music, and a passion for the art produced between these three persons the greatest intimacy. Monsieur de Francueil introduced me to Madame d'Épinay, and we sometimes supped together at her house. She was amiable, had wit and talent, and was certainly a very desirable acquaintance; but she had a female friend, a Mademoiselle d'Ette, who was said to have much malignancy in her disposition; she lived with the Chevalier de Valory, whose temper was far from being one of the best. I am of opinion that an acquaintance with these two persons was prejudicial to Madame d'Épinay, to whom, with an exacting disposition, nature had given very excellent qualities to regulate or counterbalance her extravagances. Monsieur de Francueil inspired her with a part of the friendship he had conceived for me, and told me of the close connection between them, of which, for that reason, I would not now speak were it not become so public as not to be concealed from Monsieur d'Épinay himself. Monsieur de Francueil, indeed, confided to me secrets of a very singular nature relative to this lady, of

which she herself never spoke to me, nor so much as suspected my having a knowledge of them; for I never opened my lips to her upon the subject, nor will I ever do so to any person.[1] The confidence that all parties had in my prudence rendered my situation very embarrassing, especially with Madame de Francueil, whose knowledge of me was sufficient to remove from her all suspicion on my account, although I was connected with her rival. I did everything I could to console this poor woman, whose husband certainly did not return the affection she had for him. I listened to these three persons separately, and I kept all their secrets so faithfully that not one of the three ever drew from me those of the two others; and this without concealing from either of the women my attachment for her rival. Madame de Francueil, who frequently wished to make me an agent, received formal refusals, and Madame d'Épinay once desiring me to charge myself with a letter to Francueil, received the same rebuff, accompanied by a very express declaration that if she wished to drive me for ever from the house she had only a second time to make me a like proposition. In justice to Madame d'Épinay, I must say, that far from being offended with me, she spoke of my conduct to Francueil in terms of the highest approbation, and continued to receive me as cordially as ever. It was thus, amidst the heartburnings of three persons, to whom I was obliged to

[1] Madame d'Épinay's *Memoirs*, published many years afterwards, contain some curious particulars on this subject.

behave with circumspection, on whom I in some measure depended, and for whom I had conceived an attachment, that, by conducting myself with mildness and complaisance, although accompanied with the greatest firmness, I preserved unto the last, not only their friendship, but their esteem and confidence. Notwithstanding my stupidity and awkwardness, Madame d'Épinay would have me make one of a party to La Chevrette, a country-house near Saint-Denis, belonging to Monsieur de Bellegarde. There was a theatre, in which performances were not unfrequent. I had a part given me, which I studied for six months without intermission, and in which, on the evening of the representation, I was obliged to be prompted from the beginning to the end. After this experiment no second proposal of the kind was made to me.

My acquaintance with Madame d'Epinay procured me that of her sister-in-law, Mademoiselle de Bellegarde, who soon afterwards became Comtesse de Houdetot. The first time I saw her she was upon the point of marriage, when she conversed with me for a long time with that charming familiarity which was natural to her. I thought her very amiable, but I was far from foreseeing that this young person would lead me, although innocently, into the abyss in which I now am.

Although I have not spoken of Diderot since my return from Venice, nor yet of my friend Monsieur Roguin, I had not neglected either of them, especially the former, with whom I daily

became more intimate. He had a Nanette, as well as I a Thérèse; this was between us another bond of conformity. But there was this difference: my Thérèse, as fine a woman as his Nanette, was of a mild and amiable character, which might gain and fix the affections of a worthy man; whereas his Nanette was a vixen, a troublesome prater, and had no qualities in the eyes of others which in any measure compensated for her want of education. However, he married her, which was well done of him, if he had given a promise to that effect. I, for my part, not having entered into any such engagement, was not in any haste to imitate him.

I was also connected with the Abbé de Condillac, who had acquired no more literary fame than myself, but in whom there was every appearance of his becoming what he now is. I was, perhaps, the first who discovered the extent of his abilities, and esteemed them as they deserved. He on his part seemed satisfied with me, and whilst shut up in my chamber in the Rue Jean-Saint-Denis, near the Opera, composing my act of 'Hesiod,' he sometimes came to dine with me tête-à-tête, and take what was going. We sent for our dinner, and paid share and share alike. He was at that time employed on his *Essai sur l'Origine des Connaissances Humaines*, which was his first work. When this was finished, the difficulty was to find a bookseller who would take it. The booksellers of Paris are arrogant and rude towards every author at his beginning, and metaphysics, not

much then in vogue, was no very inviting subject. I spoke to Diderot of Condillac and his work; and I afterwards brought them acquainted with each other. They were worthy of each other's esteem, and were presently on the most friendly terms. Diderot persuaded the bookseller Durand to take the manuscript from the Abbé, and this great metaphysician received for his first work, and almost as a favour, a hundred écus, which perhaps he would not have obtained without my assistance. As we lived in quarters of the town very distant from each other, we all assembled, once a week, at the Palais-Royal, and went to dine at the Hôtel du Panier Fleuri. These little weekly dinners must have been extremely pleasing to Diderot, for he, who failed in almost all his appointments, never missed one of these. I formed at this time the plan of a periodical paper, entitled *Le Persifleur*, which Diderot and I were to write alternately. I sketched out the first sheet, and this brought me acquainted with D'Alembert, to whom Diderot mentioned it. Unforeseen events frustrated our intention, and the project was carried no further.

These two authors had just undertaken the *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique*, which at first was intended to be nothing more than a kind of translation of Chambers, something like that of James's *Medical Dictionary*, which Diderot had just finished. The latter was desirous that I should do something in this second undertaking, and proposed to me the musical part, which I accepted. This I executed in great

haste, and consequently very ill, in the three months he had allowed me, as well as all the authors who were engaged on the work. But I was the only person in readiness at the time prescribed. I gave him my manuscript, which I had caused to be copied by a lackey belonging to Monsieur de Francueil, named Dupont, who wrote very well. I paid him ten écus out of my own pocket, and these have never been reimbursed me. Diderot had promised me a recompense on the part of the booksellers, of which he has never since spoken to me, nor I to him.

This undertaking of the *Encyclopédie* was interrupted by his imprisonment. The *Pensées Philosophiques* had drawn upon him some temporary inconvenience, which had no disagreeable consequences. He did not come off so easily on account of the *Lettre sur les Aveugles*, in which there was nothing reprehensible but some personal attacks with which Madame Dupré de Saint-Maur and Monsieur de Réaumur were displeased; for this he was confined in the donjon of Vincennes. Nothing can describe the anguish I felt on account of the misfortune of my friend. My wretched imagination, which always sees everything in the worst light, was terrified. I imagined him there for the remainder of his life. I was almost distracted with the thought. I wrote to Madame de Pompadour, beseeching her to release him, or to obtain an order to lock me up with him. I received no answer to my letter. It was too unreasonable to be efficacious, and I do not

flatter myself that it contributed to the alleviation which some time afterwards was granted to the se erities of poor Diderot's imprisonment. Had this continued for any length of time with the same rigour, I verily believe I should have died in despair at the foot of that hated donjon. However, if my letter produced but little effect, I did not on account of it attribute to myself much merit, for I mentioned it but to very few people, and never to Diderot himself.

END OF VOL. II.

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